ESSAYS

On Several

SUBJECTS.

Written By

Sir *Tho. Pope Blount.*

Conamur Tenues Grandia.
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The PREFACE.

Reader,

'TIS *as impossible for an* Author *to please all Mens fancies, as it is for a* Cook *to gratifie every Man's palate. For the minds of Men are of different Frames and Tempers, and therefore those Notions that are pleasing to one Man, do often prove nauseous to another. This then is the reason, that* Authors *are either doom'd, or approv'd, not according to their own merits, or demerits, but even as the* Reader *stands inclin'd, who generally frames his Judgement from his own settl'd humour, or Opinion; And as the* Book *agrees, or disagrees with that, so is the* Author *to receive his Fate. And thus is verified that known saying,* Quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum Recipientis.

What kind of Reception this little

Treatiſe may find in the World, I neither know, nor value: I writ it in my idle hours, for my own Entertainment; And therefore if it reliſhes not thy Guſto, the only way to be even with me, is for thee to turn Author, and then (poſſibly) I may have occaſion to return the Compliment. The Age we now live in is both Critical, and Cenſorious; and therefore if there be any part of a Book, which (either through the unhappy ſtyle of the Author, *or the ill nature of the* Reader) *ſeems to admit of a double Conſtruction, the Author may aſſure himſelf it ſhall be taken in the worſt; upon which Conſideration, I think it proper to acquaint thee, That whatſoever Opinion the* Clergy *may pleaſe to have of this Book, or its Author, I unfeignedly declare my ſelf to be a true Honourer of them, I mean, of ſuch of them, as live up to the Honour of that Holy Profeſſion, and for thoſe that do not, I as little Court their* Favour, *as I value their Cenſure.*

ESSAY

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ESSAY I.

That INTEREST *governs the World: And that* Popery *is nothing but* Prieſt-Craft, *or an Invention of the* Prieſts *to get* Money.

INTEREST and Profit are the great *Diana* of this World. *Theſe*, ſaith an Ingenious Author, *like God, ſit at the top of* Jacob's *Ladder, and all our Actions are but Steps and Rounds to go up to them.* To this Shrine the greateſt part of Mankind are ready to offer Incenſe, and with this Golden Hook even the wiſeſt and beſt of Men are apt to be caught. INTEREST is of that Magnetick quality; that our affections are almoſt irreſiſtably attracted by it: It is the Pole to which we turn, and we commonly

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frame our Judgements according to its direction. Men generally look more after the *Dowry* than the *Beauty* of Truth, its correſpondency to their Intereſts, than its evidence to their underſtandings. An uſeful Error hath often found free admiſſion, when important Truths, but contrary to Mens Preconceptions or Intereſts, have been forbidden entrance. Temporal Expectations bring in whole droves to the *Mahumetan* Faith; and we too well know the ſame holds thouſands in the *Romiſh*. An Advantagious cauſe never wanted Proſelytes. The Eagles will be where the Carcaſe is: And that ſhall have the faith of moſt, which is beſt able to pay them for't. In all Ages of the World INTEREST govern'd Mankind; and therefore we ſee the wiſeſt Law-Makers ſtill built upon this foundation; making it the Intereſt of the Community to put their Laws in Execution; hence *Plutarch* reported *Solon* to have ſaid, That he had ſo fram'd his Laws, that the Citizens were

were ſenſible, it was more their Intereſt to obſerve them, than to Violate them. Almighty God, when he firſt gave Laws to his own People the *Jews*, was pleaſed to conſider them as a Worldly, Covetous ſort of People; and therefore to make their Obedience the more eaſie, he gives them a Conſtitution agreeable to their Genius, promiſing them all ſorts of Temporal Bleſſings, ſuch as *poſſeſſion of the Land, freedom from Bondage, &c.* He very well knew, that Worldly Intereſt would go a great deal further than the pure, intrinſick worth of Vertue and Goodneſs; and therefore that the ſureſt way to enforce his Laws, was by ſtriking upon their Affections. Thus is God fain to deal with Men, juſt as the Husbandman in the Goſpel did; by proffering his *Penny*, before he can prevail with them to work in his *Vineyard*. Chriſt obſerv'd, That the Multitudes throng'd after him more for the Loaves and Fiſhes, than for his Doctrine; intimating that few lov'd

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him *Gratis*, but to make advantage by him: And this the Devil knew too well, when he charg'd *Job* with it, ſaying, *Does Job ſerve God for nought*? In a word, *Gain* and *Advantage* is that which every Man aims at; Be the buſineſs never ſo *bad*, you may have it done for Money; and be it never ſo good, you cannot have it done without. Let us but caſt our Eyes upon thoſe two Religions, the *Old Heatheniſh*, and the *Romiſh*, and we ſhall ſoon ſee their Reſpective *Prieſts* offering Incenſe to the *Unrighteous Mammon*. No ſooner was that, which was called by the name of Religion, planted among the *Heathen*, but immediately a Pert, forward ſort of Men, I mean their *Prieſts*, ſtood up, and inſinuated to the People the abſolute Neceſſity of *Sacrifices*; And that theſe *Sacrifices* could never be acceptable to the *Gods*, unleſs they were offer'd up by uncorrupt, Sanctified Hands, meaning their own. How beneficial theſe *Sacrifices* were to the *Heathen Prieſts*, you

you may eaſily imagine; Since (according to the old Proverb) 'Tis an ill Cook that can't lick his own Fingers. And unleſs their *Prieſts* had found advantage by it, certainly they would never have enjoyned the People ſuch an unaccountable way of worſhip. For what a ſtrange, and uncouth Belief was it, to think that the moſt proper way to attone and pacifie their *Offended Gods*, was by Slaying and Sacrificing *Innocent Creatures*? Thus in the firſt ages of the World did Men ſuffer themſelves to be gull'd and chous'd by the Artifice of their Crafty and Ambitious *Prieſts*. But before I proceed, I muſt here (in my own defence) make a ſhort Digreſſion; by deſiring the Reader to obſerve, that the *Sacrifices* I mention, are the *Heathen Sacrifices*; And therefore if any one ſhall be ſo diſingenuous, as to ſay that by an *Innuendo* I mean the *Jewiſh Sacrifices*; I have this to ſay in anſwer to ſuch, That their want of Charity in judging that to be my meaning, which I ne-

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ver intended, is (I am ſure) a much greater Crime, than any thing I have offer'd in the ſaid Diſcourſe. But ſince I have this Oportunity, I will now declare my thoughts as to the *Jewiſh Sacrifices*; This therefore I take to be the true and only reaſon why Almighty God commanded his People the *Jews* the uſe of *Sacrifices*; not becauſe he himſelf had any delight in them; but becauſe the *Jews* had been us'd to this kind of Worſhip, while they were in *Egypt*; which had made a deep root in their minds; and that they were ſuch an obſtinate ſort of People, that if they had not been comply'd with in this point of *Sacrifices*, (which was a Religion ſomewhat agreeable to their Idolatrous temper,) they could never have been brought off from their Idolatry, and Heatheniſh Religion: And therefore Almighty God allow'd the *Jews* the uſe of *Sacrifices*, as a thing rather agreeable to their Genius and Complexion, than any ways ſuitable to his own pure, Divine Nature. *He did*

did not preſcribe theſe things becauſe they were beſt, (ſaith the Reverend Dr. Tillotſon,) *but becauſe the temper of that People would then admit of nothing better.* But I beg pardon for this Digreſſion, and do now proceed. Was it not alſo from the ſame root, I mean, the Covetous temper of the *Heathen Prieſts*, from whence ſprung up the firſt *Idolatry* that ever was in the World? Thoſe crafty, Covetous *Prieſts* knew well enough, that the celebrating many Gods, and the introducing ſeveral Worſhips of them, would turn much more to their profit and advantage, than the ſingle Worſhip of the *Supreme God*: And therefore rather than want *Gods*, they took care to Coin a ſufficient number of them; there being no leſs (according to *Varro*) than thirty thouſand *Heathen Deities.* And that the *Prieſts* (let them pretend to what they would) conſulted not herein the good of the People, ſo much, as their own particular Intereſts, does moſt manifeſtly appear; by the choice they

made of their *Gods*; moſt of which (we know) were renowned for nothing ſo much as for their Vices: *Mars* a bloody God; *Bacchus* a drunken God; *Mercury* a cheating God; and ſo proportionably in the ſeveral kinds all the reſt; Nay, even their great capital God, *Jupiter*, was guilty of almoſt all the capital Vices. And therefore no wonder, we find ſuch groſs and extravagant things in the old *Heatheniſh* Religion, when the very Gods, whom they Worſhipp'd, gave ſuch Encouragement thereunto by their lewd Example: And where the *Gods* are naught, who can expect the *Religion* ſhould be good; for 'tis the nature of all Religions, to encline Men to imitate him whom they worſhip. Another Artifice whereby the *Heathen Prieſts* us'd to make themſelves eſteem'd and valued, was that Invention of theirs, the ſetting up of *Oracles*. 'Tis hard to ſay, who were guilty of the greater folly, the *Ignorant Heathen*, who believ'd thoſe Predictions to come from *Heaven*; or

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thoſe *Superſtitious Chriſtians*, who thought they came from the *Devil*; ſince they were both under a groſs miſtake. For certainly to any Man, who is unbiaſs'd in opinion, and who dares ſuffer himſelf to think beyond the narrow Rules of his Education, they cannot appear to be any thing but the meer juggling and Impoſture of the *Heathen Prieſts*; who upon all occaſions were ready to flatter the Prince, and to inſinuate to the People the abſolute neceſſity of complying with the Ambitious Deſigns of their preſent Rulers. Hence then, whenever there was any extraordinary occaſion for making uſe of the People, as in time of War, it was always contriv'd that the *Oracle* ſhould be *Conſulted*, which never fail'd to *Pronounce* in favour of the Preſent Government. And therefore, no wonder the *Prieſts* were ſuch Favourites at Court, ſince they were ſo uſeful to the *Prince* in the managing and ſteering of the common People. Thus it plainly appears, That *Intereſt*

reſt was the Principle of thoſe *Heathen Prieſts*: Let us now ſee, whether, when *Popery* came upon the Stage, the World was any thing mended; or whether the *Popiſh Prieſts* were Men more abſtracted from Worldly Intereſt, or no. In after times, when *Rome-Pagan* became *Rome-Chriſtian*, then ſprung there up a new Set of Men, who for Craft and Subtilty did many degrees outgo their Predeceſſors, the *Heathen Prieſts*; Theſe appeared but meer Bunglers, compared to this new Brood, whoſe very *Religion* was nothing elſe but *Sacerdotal Intereſt*. For whoever examines the whole Fabrick of *Popery*, ſhall find that the Corner-ſtone of that Building is Intereſt: And were it not for the *Profitable* part, I queſtion not but the *Fooliſh* part of *Popery* would ſoon be laught out of doors. But ſince the true nature of Things is beſt to be learnt in their *Minute Parts*, we will lay aſide *Generals*, and deſcend to *Particulars*: To begin therefore with the very Original

ginal of *Popery*, which you will find to be thus. As on the one hand it muſt be confeſs'd, that the Primitive Chriſtians, who were generally Subjects of the *Roman* Empire, had a very great deference and reſpect for the Biſhops of *Rome*, becauſe that was the *Imperial* City; ſo on the other hand, Church-Hiſtory plainly ſhews, That, notwithſtanding this great deference, the Biſhops of *Rome* had no Authority or Juriſdiction out of their own *Province*, that is, beyond the Suburbicary Region of *Italy*, till after the Diviſion of the *Roman* Empire into Eaſtern and Weſtern. It was not long after that Diviſion, and chiefly upon the weakneſs of the Weſtern Empire, that that Power, which we now call the *Papacy*, grew up. As the Empire decay'd, ſo by degrees this encreaſed and gather'd Strength; the deſign being at firſt, not to ſet up a new *Religion*, but a new *Monarchy* in the place of the old then expiring. Thus while the *Roman* Empire was gaſping for Life,

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did the Biſhops of *Rome* force it to make what Will and Teſtament they pleas'd. Being thus Eſtabliſh'd, and making *Rome*, whoſe name was ſtill Venerable, the Seat of their Dominion, they ſoon obtain'd a Supremacy over the Weſtern World. In this manner, and with theſe Steps did the *Papacy* firſt advance it ſelf; their Deſigns being apparently Secular, tending not to the Salvation of Mens Souls, but the Support of their own grandure. And therefore theſe *Spiritual Machiavillians*, according to the old Policy, are for preſerving their Empire after the ſame way and manner as it was at firſt acquired. No wonder then that the chief *Topick* of *Popery*, is *Argumentum ab Utili*; which of all Arguments carries the greateſt force in the Church of *Rome*: And this will more plainly appear, if we do but draw up the Curtain, and preſent you with *Popery* in its full light. 'Tis ſcarce within the reach of Arithemetick, what vaſt, prodigious Sums theſe ſeveral Doctrines

trines [the Popes Supremacy, Purgatory, Indulgences. Auricular Confeſſion, and the Celibacy of the Clergy] bring in to the Church; And therefore as one wittily expreſſeth it, *They muſt maintain them, becauſe they are maintained by them.*

1. As to the *Pope's Supremacy.* How ſlight a Foundation this Doctrine hath, I think to any rational Man will ſoon appear; for ſuppoſing St. *Peter* was Biſhop of *Rome*, (though the Learned Dr. *Barrow*, and many others are of opinion he never was there,) and that as Metropolitan thereof, he had the percedency of the reſt of the *Apoſtles*; what then? Could hence a ſufficient Power be devolv'd on his Succeſſor, to raiſe a real Monarchy, and to claim an abſolute Juriſdiction over the whole World, with a Power to diſpoſe of Crowns and Kingdoms? This is certainly a *Non Sequitur.* Nor was St. *Peter* ever veſted with any ſuch Priviledges as theſe, nor did his Succeſſors for many Ages ever Challenge them; And at laſt

laſt the only title the *Pope* had to them, was Uſurpation. But how unreaſonable ſoever this Doctrine may appear to thoſe who get not by it, his *Holineſs* hath reaſon to keep it up, ſince it ſerves to the filling his Coffers; And if he ſhould once part with it, he at the ſame time Lops off the beſt Branch of his Revenue.

2. As to *Purgatory*. This Doctrine was never ſo much as thought of till St. *Auſtin's* time, who both *Said* it, and *Unſaid* it, and at laſt left it doubtful; Nor did it come into any ſort of Credit till about two hundred Years after, in the time of Pope *Gregory* the firſt. The *Papiſts* themſelves are ſo divided as to all the Points and Circumſtances of this Doctrine, that poſſibly it will not a little entertain the Reader, to ſee the fooliſh variety of Opinions relating to this Doctrine. Firſt as to the place, where they ſuppoſe this Imaginary Goal to be; *Eckius* will have it to be in the bottom of the Sea; Others will have it either in Mount *Ætna*, or *Veſuvius*;

But *Bernard de Buſtis* places it in an Hill in *Ireland*. Next, as to the Torments; Sir *Thomas More* will have them to be only by Fire; but *Fiſher*, by Fire and Water; *Lorichius* neither by Fire, nor by Water, but by the violent Convulſions of Hope and Fear. Then, as to the Executioners, or Tormenters; They do as little agree about them; for Biſhop *Fiſher* will have them to be the Holy Angels; but Sir *Thomas More* to be the very Devils. Then, as to the Sins to be there Expiated; Some will have them to be the *Venial* only; but others ſay the *Mortal* too. And for the time of the Souls continuance in that State; *Dennis* the *Carthuſian* extends it to the end of the World; whereas *Dominicus à Soto* limits it to ten Years; and others make it depend on the number of *Maſſes*, and Offices, that ſhall be ſaid or done on their behalf. Laſtly, as to the extremity of the pains; *Aquinas* makes them as violent as thoſe of *Hell*; But the *Rhemiſts*, in their Annotations upon *Revelations*

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the 14*th*. Verſe the 13*th*. ſay, That the Souls there are in a very fine condition: And *Durandus, de Offic. Mortuor. Cap.* VII. between theſe extreams, gives them ſome Intermiſſion from thoſe terrible pains, upon Sundays, and Holy Days. So fooliſhly extravagant are theſe ſeveral fancies and conceits of *Purgatory*, that it may not be altogether impertinent to enquire into the Original and Source of this Doctrine. And this will preſently appear to any one who is in the leaſt vers'd in the Heathen Poets and Philoſophers. Theſe were the firſt Hatchers of this Notion, and from thence was it firſt derived. *Homer*, in the 2*d*. Book of his *Odyſſ.* entertains us with long Stories of *Ulyſſes*'s deſcent into Hell, the Dialogues of Ghoſts, the Puniſhment of departed Souls, and the Sacrifices to be offer'd to relieve them; And herein is he imitated by *Virgil*, who, in the Sixth of his *Æneids*, brings in *Anchiſes* diſcourſing at the ſame rate. Nor were their Philoſophers free from

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theſe ſort of Dreams; witneſs *Plato*, who, in his Book *de Anima*, broaches the like Doctrine; And *Cicero*, in *Scipio's Dream*, harps upon the ſame ſtring. Hence *Bellarmin*, urging ſeveral reaſons for this Doctrine of Purgatory, his third is taken from the common opinion of all Nations, *Hebrews*, *Mahumetans*, and *Gentiles*, both *Philoſophers* and *Poets*. But to conclude this point, as ridiculous as this Doctrine of *Purgatory* is, there is not any one Opinion in the Church of *Rome*, that the *Romaniſts* are more zealous in the aſſerting; Nor is it to be wondred that they are ſo, ſince herein they act upon *Demetrius's* Principle, *Becauſe thereby they have their gain*; And therefore well may they be allow'd to be angry, and diſpleas'd at all thoſe, who ſpeak and write againſt it; for by that means *their Craft is in danger to be ſet at nought*. There being no Opinion in their Church, which brings in a better and more conſtant Revenue, by *Maſſes*, *Dirges*, *Requiems*, *Trentals*,

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and *Anniverſaries*, beſides *Caſualties* and *Deodands*, by dying Perſons, or their Friends, in hopes of a ſpeedier releaſe out of the pains of *Purgatory*. So that if this Opinion were once out of Countenance in the World, they would then loſe one of the beſt Arts they have of upholding the Grandure of their Church. And it is very remarkable, That the fear of loſing this Income, was one main Impediment to reſtrain the Pope from yielding to a Reformation.

3. As to *Indulgences* and *Pardons*. In the Primitive times, when the *Chriſtians* had committed any heinous offence, as for example, either in denying their Faith, or Sacrificing to Idols, for fear of Perſecution; the Parties offending were enjoyn'd ſome ſevere and long *Pennance*: And the rigour of this, the Biſhops, or Paſtors, in their reſpective Congregations, had power, (if they ſaw Cauſe) to mitigate at their diſcretion; which Mitigation, or Relaxation of Puniſhment, was called an *Indulgence*, or ſometimes

ſometimes a *Pardon*. And this was derived from St. *Paul*, who releas'd the *Inceſtuous Corinthian* from the bond of Excommunication, upon his Humiliation, and ſerious Repentance. This manner of *Indulgence* was Ancient, and of long Continuance in the Primitive Church. The firſt account we have of perverting this Cuſtom, and the proſtituting it to Secular ends, was in the time of Pope *Gregory* the firſt, about the Year 600. And ever ſince that time, 'tis ſcarce credible what an immenſe Sum this Doctrine hath brought in to the Church. And certainly, of all the Arts that the Church of *Rome* hath for the raiſing of Money, this is the cleverеſt and neateſt Contrivance; and therefore one wittily calls theſe *Indulgences*, *Emulgences*; and even by the *Romaniſts* themſelves they are call'd, in their trueſt Signification, *The Treaſury of the Church*. The Pope is the ſole Diſpenſer and Diſpoſer of theſe *Indulgences*; and therefore whenever he hath occaſion, or a

Mind to fill his Treaſury, all that he needs to do, is, upon pretence of War againſt the Infidels or Hereticks, to ſend out, and proclaim Marts, and Sales for theſe *Indulgences*, upon condition that thoſe, who would diſburſe any Sums of Money (which is all to be laid out (as he pretends) upon the ſaid occaſion,) ſhould have *Pardons* and *Indulgences* for numbers of Years proportionable to the Sums they could, or would depoſite; *Nam aliter non abſolvebantur, niſi tribuerent ſecundum Poſſe ſuum, & facultatem ſuam; For otherwiſe they could not be abſolv'd, except they did disburſe as much as their abilities would afford*, as *Henr. de Knighton*, an Engliſh Hiſtorian in *Richard* the Second's time, honeſtly and plainly tells us; And then as for the Poor and Indigent, truly they deſerve our pity, when the *Taxa Cameræ Apoſtolicæ* deals thus plainly with them, *Nota diligenter quód hujuſmodi Gratiæ non conceduntur Pauperibus; QUIA non habent, ergó non poſſunt Conſolari; Note diligently,*

diligently, That ſuch graces are not granted to the Poor; Becauſe *they have not wherewithal, they cannot be comforted.* A very ſad Caſe indeed! Thus, though our Saviour tells us, how hard it is for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; yet by the Religion of *Popery* the difficulty lies wholly on the Poor Man's ſide; and the only Sin capable of *Damning* a Rich Man, is that of *Covetouſneſs*; for let him but fee his *Holineſs* well, and he may then ſafely ſing a *Requiem* to his Soul.

4. As to *Auricular Confeſſion.* The neceſſity of this Doctrine was unknown to the Fathers of the Primitive Church. Nay, about a Thouſand Years after Chriſt, it was held diſputable in the *Roman* Church. And though the Practice of it was impos'd by Pope *Innocent*, in his Council of *Lateran*; yet even then it remain'd diſputable as to the Doctrine, till the *Council* of *Trent* gave it the Sanction of *Divine Faith.* At firſt it was voluntary, and only us'd in

Caſe of a troubled Conſcience, or a ſtrong Temptation: But it is now made neceſſary at ſtated times, in all probability to make the *Prieſt* Maſter of every Man's Secrets. This is the main Curb of the Laity, whereby the Clergy hold them in awe; for by this means they have an Intelligencer in the breaſt of every Great Man of their Communion; Which is a thing of that vaſt Conſequence, that if ever they part with it, then farewel *Popery*.

5. As to the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy*. That this Cuſtom was derived from the *Heathens*, will plainly appear; *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, That the *Ancient Hereticks* took occaſion to condemn Marriage from the Precepts and Practices of Pagan Philoſophers. And St. *Hierome* ſaith, that the *Athenian Hierophanta's* to this day, by ſupping the Broth of *Hemlock*, make themſelves Chaſt (being forbidden Marriage,) before they were admitted into Sacred Orders, or advanced to *Prelatical* Dignity. And

Alexander

Alexander ab Alexandro informs us, That the Prieſts of *Cybele* did caſtrate themſelves, that they might be Chaſt. And he further adds in the ſame place, That thoſe who performed their greateſt Solemnities (or their Chief Prieſts) that they might continue in chaſt Religion, and eſcape the Contagion of Women, did emaſculate themſelves with certain Herbs. And *Euripides* teſtifieth, That in *Crete* thoſe whom they call'd the *Prophets of Jupiter*, do not only abſtain from Fleſh, but alſo from all ſavoury Meat. And the like did the *Indian Magi*, who were advanced to the *Prieſthood of the Sun*: And among the *Aſſyrians*, the Prieſts of *Diana Ecbatana* liv'd in perpetual Virginity. To add more Teſtimonies is needleſs, ſince the *Romaniſts* are themſelves ſo far from denying it, that ſeveral of them, as Pope *Syricius*, *Medina*, and others, urge it as an unanſwerable Argument againſt the *Marriage* of *Prieſts*. But notwithſtanding the great care the *Hea-*

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then Prieſts took as to their *Chaſtity*, yet we find it ſignified but little; And therefore *Arnobius* deſcribing the ſingle life of *Prieſts* amongſt the *Heathen*, ſaith, Where are Whoredoms more frequently committed than by *Prieſts*, even in their *Temples*, nay before the very *Altars*? And in the Concluſion he tells us, That their Luſt was more frequently diſcharged in *Chancels*, than *Brothel-Houſes*. But having ſhew'd this to be a Cuſtom derived from the *Heathens*, and the effect it had; let us (now) ſee, whether the *Primitive Chriſtians* had any ſuch uſage; and when, and by what means, it was at firſt introduced, and the Uſe that hath ſince been made of it. That there was no ſuch Uſage in the Primitive Church, is moſt certain, for St. *Ambroſe* in his Comment on 2 *Cor.* 11. teſtifies, that all the *Apoſtles*, except St. *John* and St. *Paul*, had Wives. And alſo *Euſebius*, *Ruffinus*, and *Socrates*, Eccleſiaſtical Writers of great Note, do all teſtify of ſeveral very

very Religious Biſhops, who had Children by their lawful Wives, after they were Biſhops. And the *Greek Church* even to this day obſerves it for a Cuſtom, not to admit any into *Holy Orders*, unleſs they were Married; as judging them then more ſtay'd, and leſs ſubject to Temptations. The firſt Account we meet with of prohibiting Wives to the Clergy, was not long before the *Nicene Council*: A fooliſh Opinion had then ſeiz'd the Heads of ſome of the Leading Men of the Church, That no Married Man was fit to officiate at the Altar; Whereupon the Queſtion came to be ſtarted in the *Council* of *Nice*; Of which matter the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian *Socrates*, *Lib.* I. *Cap.* VIII. gives us this account, Ἔδοξε τοῖς Ἐπισκόποις, &c. *It pleas'd ſome of the Biſhops to bring in a new Law into the Church, That thoſe who were dedicated to the Holy Miniſtry*, viz. *Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons, ſhould not ſleep any longer with their Wives.* But this at firſt was moſt

moſt ſtrenuouſly oppos'd, and particularly by one *Paphnutius*, an *Egyptian* Biſhop, who had formerly one of his Eyes pluckt out for the Teſtimony of the Bleſſed *Jeſus*. Nor did this Doctrine advance it ſelf into a *Decree*, till above fifty Years after, at which time *Siricius* Biſhop of *Rome* firſt ordain'd it; though for many hundred Years after it was not much obſerv'd, till *Gregory* the Seventh, commonly call'd *Hildebrand*, began to put it in Execution; by excommunicating all ſuch *Married Prieſts*, as would not immediately quit their Wives, and take the Oath of *Continency*. And this hath been ſtrictly obſerv'd ever ſince; The *Council* of *Trent* having denounced an *Anathema* againſt all thoſe who ſhall ſay, *That Clerks in Holy Orders may contract Matrimony; And that ſuch a contract is valid, notwithſtanding the Laws and Conſtitutions of the Church.* But how little this *Romiſh Celibacy* ſignified amongſt their *Prieſts*, as to the keeping them Chaſt, even their own Hiſtorians

ſtorians can beſt inform us. *Matthew Paris* tells us, The Pope thought it almoſt a Miracle to hear a *Candidate* for a Biſhoprick atteſted to be a *pure Virgin*; *Alvarus Pelagius*, a Portugal Biſhop, in the 14*th* Century, in his known Book *De Planctu Eccleſiæ*, amongſt other crying Sins of the *Roman* Clergy of his days, Laments in an eſpecial manner their Incontinency, wiſhing that the *Spaniards* and *Regnicolæ* eſpecially, had never promis'd Continency: The Children of the *Clergy* being, in thoſe Countrys, ſays he, more numerous than thoſe of the *Laity*; and what is more deteſtable, for ſeveral Years together, from their Concubines beds they go ſtraight to the Altar. And in another place, the very ſame Author complains of their debauching the Women, who came to Confeſſion. *Alfonſus à Caſtro* tells us, That if they ſhould attempt to conceal the Incontinency of the Clergy, their own Children would proclaim it. *Johannes Aventinus* affirms, that the Salacity of

of the *Prieſts* was ſo famous, that it was grown into a Proverb. *Robert Holkot*, who liv'd in the fourteenth Century, a Dominican by Profeſſion, and born at *Northampton*, ſtiles the Prieſts of his days, Prieſts of *Priapus* and *Baalpheor*. *Johannes Gerſon*, ſpeaking of the Incontinency of the Prieſts, ſaith, That it was ſo rooted and Epidemical an Evil, that as things ſtood under the reign of *Celibacy*, if Prieſts were not allow'd the uſe of common Women they would (in ſeveral places) fall upon the Wives and Daughters of their Pariſhioners. Nay, even *Albertus Pighius* and *Dominicus Soto*, as ſtout Aſſertors as they were of the *Celibacy*, yet were ſo ingenuous as to confeſs the leudneſs it Occaſions. Thus could I, from ſeveral other inſtances of the like Nature, drawn from their own Hiſtorians, dilate upon this Subject; As alſo, by adding the remarkable Inſtances of the great Incontinency, or the unchaſt *Celibate* of ſeveral of their *Popes* themſelves; as of *Paul* the

the Second, *Sixtus* the Fourth, *Innocent* the Eighth, *Alexander* the Sixth, *Julius* the Second, *Leo* the Tenth, *Paul* the Third, *Julius* the Third, &c. But I forbear this, ſince raking of Dunghills is an Employment more fit for a *Scavenger* than a *Gentleman.* That ſo great Wickedneſs ſhould ever be Practis'd amongſt ſuch as ſerve at the Altar, is indeed a thing much to be lamented; but that ever any Chriſtian Church ſhould allow and approve of ſuch Practices, is matter of Aſtoniſhment; And yet that the Church of *Rome* does ſo, is moſt clear, and manifeſt. Hence we find it was one of the *German* Grievances, *That ſuch Prieſts as were diſpos'd to live Chaſtly, and abhorred this Sin of Uncleanneſs, were compell'd to take Diſpenſations to keep Concubines. Nicolaus de Clemangis* alſo makes the ſame ſort of complaint; *What a ſtrange thing is it*, ſays he, *That in ſeveral Dioceſes now a days the Rectors of Pariſhes bargain with their Biſhops for Licenſe to keep Concubines?* That Great

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Great Angelical Doctor of the Church of Rome, *Thomas Aquinas* (whether from his own Complexion, or no, I know not) ſeems to be ſo great a favourer of this Vice, that he argues for it in a pretty odd ſort of a Manner, in his 4*th.* Book *De Regimine Principum*; *Id facit in Mundo Meretrix*, &c. *A Whore in the World*, ſaith he, *is as the Pump in a Ship, or a Privy in a Palace: Take theſe away, and all will be filled with ſtench and annoyance.* Moſt Incomparable Divinity! Sure if this Rule be true, no place for ſweetneſs can compare with *Rome*, where, by the beſt Computation, are reckon'd three Thouſand Licenſed Harlots, which pay an Annual Tribute to his *Holineſs*. But to return to my Subject, Since it plainly appears, that this Doctrine of the *Celibacy* was never us'd, nor practis'd amongſt the Chriſtians of the Primitive Church, how came then this Innovation to be introduced into the Church of *Rome*? *Cui bono*, for what end and purpoſe hath it ſo many

Ages

Ages been ſo very zealouſly aſſerted? *In promptu cauſa eſt*, the reaſon is very obvious, and a Man with half an Eye may ſee the Policy of it. This Doctrine then is maintained by the Policy of the *Court* of *Rome*, on purpoſe to make advantage of the Clergy, both while they live, and when they dye. Hence their great *Eſpencæus* crys out ſhame of that execrable Cuſtom of indulging Concubinage to Profeſſors of Chaſtity, at a ſet annual rate; aſſuring us, That amongſt the vaſt numbers of Delinquents in this kind, few, or none, ſuffer any other Puniſhment than that of the Pocket. But beſides this, 'tis of great advantage to his *Holineſs*, to diſengage the Clergy from all Civil Intereſts, and thus to make them wholly depend upon the *Court* of *Rome*; which is a thing could never be effected, ſo long as the Clergy gave hoſtages of their fidelity to the Civil Government, by the Intereſts of their Families and Children. And therefore this Inven-

tion

tion was cunningly enough contriv'd; That as the old *Roman* Souldiers were forbidden Marriage while they received pay, leſt their Domeſtick Intereſts ſhould abate their courage; So the *Celibacy* of the Clergy was ſtrictly enjoyn'd, to make them more true and hearty to the Intereſts of the *Court* of *Rome*. And the vaſt advantages that accrue to his *Holineſs* by this one Doctrine of the *Celibacy* of the Clergy, is ſcarce to be computed; ſince now the Church is the general Heir to all the Clergy.

Thus have I run over thoſe five ſeveral Gainful Doctrines in the Church of *Rome*; whereby it is moſt manifeſt, That, let them pretend what they will, Grandure and Secular Intereſt is all they aim at; And therefore let us no longer wonder at this *Prieſt-Craft* of theirs, but rather conclude with that Ingenious *Cardinal*, who, when the People flockt about him, gave them his Benediction in theſe words, SI DECIPI VULT POPULUS, DECIPIATUR.

ESSAY II.

The great miſchief and prejudice of LEARNING. And that a Wiſe Man ought to be preferr'd before a Man of LEARNING.

LEARNING does but ſerve to fill us full of Artificial Errors. That which we ſo much admire under the name of LEARNING, is only the knowing the fancies of particular Men, *Deliri veteris Meditantes ſomnia vana*, in effect but like Goſſipping Women telling one another their Dreams. The *Romans* were ſo far from eſteeming *Learning*, as an eſſential part of Wiſdom, that with them the word *Scholar* was ſeldom us'd but by way of reproach. A Learned Man may not improperly be compared to a *Crow*, deckt with the Feathers that he hath ſtolen from other Birds. He maketh (indeed) a great ſhew in the World, but he may thank others, who are at the charge of it.

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In a word, There is not a ſimpler Animal, and a more ſuperfluous Member of a State, than a meer Scholar; He is—— *Telluris inutile Pondus.* And were I to give a deſcription of a *Pedant* newly arrived from the *Univerſity*, I could not do it more to the life, than in the words of *Horace*;

Cùm ſeptem Studiis annos dedit, ſenuitque
Libris & curis, Statuâ taciturnius exit,
Plerumque & Populum riſu quatit——

No wonder then, that the *Italians*, in their *Farces*, always bring in a *Pedant* for the Fool of the Play. That Learning is no way ſerviceable to the life of Man, even daily experience ſufficiently ſhews; for how many are there in the World, of high and low condition, that live pleaſantly and happily, who never trouble themſelves with Learning. Neither is it ſerviceable to Things Natural, which an ignorant Sot may as well perform, as he that is veſted with the greateſt

Learn-

Learning; Nature is a ſufficient Miſtreſs for that. Nor doth it conduce to Honeſty, and to make us better; *Paucis eſt opus literis ad bonam Mentem*, little Learning is requiſite for a good Mind: Nay, ſome are of opinion, it rather hindreth it; And that where Learning and Knowledge go in the *Front*, Pride and Ambition always follow in the *Rear*. Hence it is obſerv'd, That *Rome* for the firſt five hundred Years, when it Flouriſh'd in Virtue and Valour, was without Knowledge; And ſo ſoon as *Learning* came amongſt them, they then began to degenerate, and to run into Factions. The beſt Eſtabliſh'd Government that ever was, and from whence have ſprung the greateſt Perſonages in the World, I mean the *Lacedemonian*, made no Profeſſion of *Learning*; And yet it was the School of Virtue and Wiſdom, and was ever Victorius over *Athens*, the moſt Learned City of the World, the School of all Science, the Habitation of the Muſes, and

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the Storehouſe of Philoſophers. *Learning* then ſerves for nothing, but to invent Niceties and Subtilties, artificial cunning Devices, and whatſoever is an Enemy to Virtue and Innocence. Atheiſm, Errors, Sects, and all the troubles of the World, have riſen from the Men of Knowledge and *Learning*. If we ſearch into the *Morals* of the moſt Learned amongſt the *Heathens*, I mean their Philoſophers, we ſhall find but little agreement betwixt their Practices and their Doctrines; And that the one did generally run counter to the other. *Plutarch* tells us, That not only *Socrates* and *Plato*, but alſo that the reſt of the Philoſophers, notwithſtanding their outward ſhew and oſtentation of ſome Vertues, were generally as intemperate, incontinent, and wicked, as any common or ordinary Slave. But of all other prophane Authors, *Lucian* paints them in the moſt lively Colours. For in his *Dialogues* he bringeth in *Menippus* ſpeaking of the Philoſophers thus; *Becauſe I was* (ſaith

(saith he) *uncertain what Course of Life to hold, I thought good to go to the Philosophers, and to take their advice, that they might direct me therein; not considering, that, as the Proverb saith, I cast my self out of the Frying-Pan into the Fire; for I found amongst them all things more uncertain than amongst any sort of Men, insomuch that the Life of the veriest Idiot, seem'd unto me more happy than theirs. For when I beheld their Lives, I perceiv'd they were clean Contrary to their own Precepts and Doctrine; those who taught that Money and Riches were to be contemn'd, did gape after nothing more than Gain, lending to Usury, teaching for Hire, and doing all for Money; Those who in words seem'd most to contemn Glory, referr'd the whole Course of their Lives thereto; And to conclude, Those who openly spoke most against Voluptuousness and Pleasure, secretly sought and embraced nothing else.* Thus (we see) the *Practices* of Men do not alway hold an equal pace to their *Theory*——*Video meliora, proboque,*

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que, Deteriora ſequor. We naturally know what is Good, but naturally purſue what is Evil. *Probitas laudatur, at Alget*—All men are ſo juſt to Vertue as to commend her, but few are ſo juſt to themſelves as to Practice her. But to return to my Subject. If we look back into the firſt Ages of the Church, we ſhall find that Philoſophy was the chief Seminary of the main Errors broach'd in thoſe times. And this (no doubt) *Tertullian* was highly ſenſible of, which made him ſtyle the Philoſophers, *the Patriarchs of Hereticks*: And *Cornelius Agrippa* ſays, That nothing more adulterates Divinity than Philoſophy, foraſmuch as all Hereſie whatſoever hath had its firſt riſe out of the Fountain of Philoſophy. The Primitive Fathers of the Church, were wont to apply themſelves with great diligence to the ſtudy of Heathen Philoſophy, on purpoſe to enable them to fight the Heathens with their own Weapons, and to Baffle them with their own Arguments.

Hence

Hence they chiefly conſulted the Philoſophy of *Ariſtotle* and *Plato*; but chiefly *Plato*'s: Becauſe that ſeem'd to ſpeak plainer about the Divine Nature; and alſo, becauſe the ſweetneſs, and powerfulneſs of *Plato*'s Writings, taught them at the ſame time the Art of Speaking, and the Strength of Reaſoning. Having thus provided themſelves againſt their Adverſaries, they eaſily got the Victory over them: For tho' the *Heathens*, for ſo many hundred Years, had very zealouſly aſſerted the truth of their ſeveral Religions; yet now their Philoſophers were ſo bafflʼd by theſe Chriſtian Doctors, that they had nothing to ſay; and at laſt were ſo ingenious, as to confeſs the ridiculouſneſs of their Religions, and to own the purity, and reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Worſhip. And now, after ſo good a Beginning, who could expect ſo unhappy a Concluſion? For it ſo fell out, That the Chriſtians having had ſuch good ſucceſs againſt the Religi-

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ons of the Heathens, by their own Weapons; inſtead of laying them down when they had done, unfortunately fell to manage them one againſt another. So many ſubtile brains having been ſet on work, and heated againſt a Foreign Enemy; when that was over, and they had nothing elſe to do, (like an Army that returns Victorious, and is not preſently disbanded) they began to ſpoil and quarrel amongſt themſelves. Hence that Religion, which at firſt appear'd ſo innocent and peaceable, and fitted for the benefit of Humane Society, was miſerably divided into a thouſand intricate Queſtions, which neither advance true Piety, nor good Manners. And from hence ſprung up the firſt Hereſies in the Church. And thus we ſee how little Religion is promoted, or advantag'd by any aſſiſtance of Humane Learning, which the Apoſtle ſufficiently inculcates, when he ſo wiſely adviſes us, *To avoid all vain Philoſophy.* And as Learning is of little uſe in making

Men

Men truly Religious; ſo it likewiſe ſignifies but little in making us either good Subjects, or great Politicians: *Licinius*, and *Valentinian*, Emperours of *Rome*, were wont to ſay, That their State had no Poyſon more dangerous, than that of Learning. *Lycurgus* alſo ſeem'd to be of the ſame opinion, when he Eſtabliſht Ignorance in his Republick. Moſt Men do attribute the greatneſs of the *Grand Seignor*'s, and the *Duke* of *Muſcovy*'s Power over their Subjects, to this one ſingle piece of Policy, *viz* their ſuppreſſing of Literature. And do we not ſee here in *England*, That in time of Popery, when that little ſtock of Learning that was amongſt us, was cloyſter'd up in Monaſteries and Abbeys, the ignorant Common People patiently crouch'd, and readily bore whatſoever burthen was put upon them. But as ſoon as ever Learning peept abroad in the World, and began to diffuſe it ſelf amongſt the Vulgar; they then began to expoſtulate with their Superiours,

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riours, and immediately threw off that Yoak, which formerly they and their Forefathers had ſo long lain under. And indeed, upon this conſideration it is, that Princes take ſo much care to keep their Subjects in Ignorance, by ſuppreſſing all ſuch Books, as lay open and proſtitute the *Arcana Imperii* to the Knowledge of the Vulgar. For Books give Men new Hints and Notions, and thoſe Notions do often put Men upon ſuch Actions, as are not always agreeable to the Intereſts of Princes. Hence that Subtle, and Crafty Prince, King *James*, (I mean the firſt, not the Second) would often ſay, *That of all ſorts of Subjects the Thinking Man made the worſt.* And even by daily Experience we find it confirm'd, that the High-flown Arbitrary Men (commonly the Darlings of Tyrants) are not Men of the deepeſt Thoughts, nor of the greateſt Foreſight and Conſideration; ſince if they were; they might eaſily diſcover, That the abſolute Power of the Prince, cannot

not be made up of any other Ingredient, than the Slavery of the Subject. But even in ſome tempers there is ſuch a Natural love to Servitude and Vaſſallage, that they think no pleaſure comparable to the hugging of their Chain; And with the Slaviſh *French Man*, their greateſt Glory is, *Nôtre Roy eſt Abſolu*, the Grammatical Conſtruction whereof is, *We are Slaves*. But that ever any, who call themſelves *Engliſh-Men*, ſhould ſink into ſuch a meanneſs of Spirit, ſo degenerating from the Vertues of their Anceſtors, (many of whom loſt their Lives in the generous Aſſerting of the *Engliſh Liberties*) is that, which as our Forefathers could never have dreamt of, ſo, for the Honour of the preſent Age, I hope, Poſterity will never Remember. But Monſters are the Product of every Age; And there is no Climat without ſome Inſects. Though Liberty be the Miſtreſs of all Generous Souls, and is that alone which gives a Reliſh to Humane Life; yet

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I ſay, there hath been lately found amongſt us a ſort of *Animals*, who have been as Induſtrious in giving up, as ever our Noble Progenitors were in Eſtabliſhing our Liberties. But whatſoever Charms, theſe the more Groſs and Earthly part of Mankind, may think there is in ſuch a Lazy, Slaviſh Subjection, yet to Men of more refined Intellectuals, and whoſe Veins run with a Nobler ſort of Blood, all that the World can give without Liberty hath no taſt. It muſt be confeſs'd, That in the two laſt Reigns, this Precious Jewel of Liberty hath been little valued; Nothing hath been ſold ſo Cheap by unthinking Men; But alas that doth no more leſſen the real value of it, than the ignorance of the Fooliſh *Indians*, did that of their *Gold*, which at firſt they Exchang'd for the moſt inconſiderable Bawbles. 'Tis the happineſs of our Conſtitution, That *King* and *People* are both Bounded; And Curſt be the Man, who ſhall go about to remove either of theſe *Land-Marks*:

Land Marks: The *Crown* hath *Prerogative* enough to protect our *Liberties*; And the *People* have ſo much *Liberty* as is neceſſary to make them uſeful to the *Crown*: So that the King's Prerogative, and the Subjects Liberty, do naturally tend to the preſerving of one another. It was the Obſervation of that Learned *Attorney General*, *Sir* Francis Bacon, *That whileſt the Prerogative runs within its Ancient and proper Banks, the main Channel thereof is ſo much the Stronger, for Over-flows evermore hurt the River.* Certainly it was no ill ſaying of *Pliny* the Younger, to the Emperour *Trajan*, *Fælicitatis eſt poſſe quantum velis, Magnitudinis velle quantum poſſis*, It is an happineſs for your Majeſty to be able to do what you will, *But your Greatneſs conſiſts in doing what you juſtly may.* And *Comines* (that honeſt French States-Man) notes, That it is more Honourable for a King to ſay, *J'ay des Subjects ſi bons & Loyaux*, &c. *My Subjects are ſo good and Loyal as to deny*

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deny me nothing, than to ſay, *I take what I pleaſe, and I will keep it.* And thoſe Courtiers (adds he) that Preach any other Doctrine, do not a little miſtake the Intereſt of their Maſters, and are ſo far from exalting their Grandure and Prerogative, that they make them indeed no Kings. For as *Bracton* ſays, *Non eſt Rex ubi dominatur Voluntas, It is not a King where Will and Pleaſure bears ſway; but rather ſome Cyclopick Monſter, which eats and drinks the Fleſh and Blood of Mankind.* Nay, even King *James* the firſt (that high Aſſerter of Prerogative) in his Speech in the Star-Chamber, *Anno* 1609. ſaith, That no ſooner does a King give over Governing according to Law, but he Ceaſes to be a King, and degenerates into a Tyrant. And the Lord Chancellor *Bacon* tells us, *That the People of this Kingdom love the Laws thereof, and nothing will oblige them more, than a Confidence of the Free Enjoying them. What the Nobles of this Land upon an occaſion once ſaid,* NOLUMUS LEGES

LEGES ANGLIÆ MUTARI, We will not have the Laws of England alter'd, *is imprinted upon the Hearts of all* Engliſh Men, *who take themſelves to have as good a Title to their Laws, as to the Common Air they breath in.* And therefore *Sir Walter Raleigh* (a man of no Vulgar Obſervations) tells us a great Thing, and in no wiſe to be ſlighted, *That the Kings of* England *have evermore ſuſtained more loſs by one Rebellion, than by a hundred years Obſervance of* MAGNA CHARTA. 'Tis obſerv'd of the *Camel*, that it lies quietly down till it hath its full Load, and then riſeth up: But the *Engliſh Mobile* is a kind of *Beaſt*, which riſeth up ſooneſt when it is over-loaden; And therefore (to conclude this Point) as an *Engliſh* Monarch may (ſo long as he obſerves the Laws) be the happieſt Prince in the World; So if he will turn *Phaeton*, and drive furiouſly, he will in the end find himſelf a King not of *Men*, but of *Devils*. But to proceed. That

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Men of Learning are not always the greateſt Politicians, even the Experience of all Ages does ſufficiently ſhew. That great and Learned Antiquary, Mr. *Selden*, informs us, That when *Conſtantine* became *Chriſtian*, He had ſo great an Affection for the *Clergy*, that he put great part of the Civil Government into their hands: But after 3 or 4 years Experience, he was very ſenſible how fatal this Error had like to have been: Whereupon he took new Meaſures; and in the Poſts of theſe unhappy Politicians, he was fain to put in a Set of Lay-Men, who having truer and better Notions of Government, ſoon corrected, and amended their Errors and Miſtakes. That the Clergy of *England* have ſince the Reformation been much abridg'd of their former Power, is what I think every Man will grant. And therefore that ſuch of them as love to be Great and Powerful, have ſtill a hankering after that old Conſtitution, I for my part cannot ſo much admire.

mire. But how comes it, that the *Clergy* are not now allow'd to have as great Power, as in times of Popery? The Reaſon is very apparent; Becauſe we found by experience, That when they were veſted with ſuch great Power, no ſort of Men ever carried it more Arbitrarily, and Tyranically, nor (indeed) committed greater Soleciſms in Politicks than they did: And therefore the Hiſtory of thoſe Times does ſufficiently warn us againſt running into the ſame Error. When men act out of their own Sphere, who can expect any good will come of it? And therefore we find it ſeldom happens, That the Stateſmen are more fortunate in meddling with Religion, than the Churchmen with State Affairs; Each mars all with tampering out of their Provinces. Chriſt's Kingdom is not of this World; Nor ought the Divines πραγματεύειν, to meddle in this Political Province; And when they do, no ſort of Men prove ſo unfortunate. Let us hear

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what the ingenious *Andrew Marvel*, ſays as to this Point. *Whether it be, that the Clergy are not ſo well fitted by Education, as others for Political Affairs, I know not; though I ſhould rather think* (ſaith he) *they have advantage above others, and if they would but keep to their Bibles, might make the beſt Miniſters of State in the World; Tet 'tis generally obſerv'd, that things miſcarry under their Government. If there be any Counſel more precipitate, more violent, more rigorous, more extream than other, that is theirs. Truly I think, the reaſon God does not Bleſs them in Affairs of State, is becauſe he never intended them for that Employment. Or if Government, and the Preaching of the Goſpel, may well concur in the ſame Perſon, God therefore fruſtrates him, becauſe, though knowing better, he ſeeks and manages his Greatneſs by the leſſer and meaner Maxims.* Upon theſe therefore, and ſuch like Conſiderations, the wiſe *Venetians* have ſo ſlight an Opinion of the Politicks of their

their church-Men, that whenever any thing that is of a conſiderable nature, occurs to be debated in the Senate, before any Suffrage paſſeth, they cauſe Proclamation to be made, for all Prieſts to depart; and the proper Officer, with a loud and audible Voice, pronounceth theſe words, *Fuora I Preti, Out Prieſts.* And it is further remarkable, That he who in this Common-wealth is called the *Divine of the State* (an Eccleſiaſtical Perſon to be adviſed with in matters of Religion) is commonly choſen ſuch a One, as is reputed the leaſt addicted to Bigottry. That no ſort of Men have prov'd more fatal in their Counſels to Princes, than the Political Divines, is a truth too much confirm'd by Experience to be deny'd. That which theſe Men chiefly aim at, is to render themſelves acceptable at Court; as knowing that the beſt Preferments come from thence; And therefore if they can but ſooth and pleaſe the Prince, they value not whether their Do-

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ctrine be true, or falſe. Hence then their chief buſineſs is to give a helping hand towards making the Prince Arbitrary: And their way to do this, is by entitling him to all thoſe *Regalia's* or *Prerogatives*, that the Kings of *Juda*, or *Iſrael*, ever enjoy'd or uſurp'd; as if the *Judicials* of *Moſes* were calculated for all Seaſons, and all Meridians. And thus aroſe that Doctrine, *That Monarchy is Jure Divino.* But this way of proceeding is no new Invention, for we find it very uſual amongſt the Ancient *Heathens*, whenever they had a mind to obtrude any odd Belief upon the Common People, they preſently trumpt up a *Jus Divinum*; and after this manner we ſee both their Laws and Religions were eſtabliſht. Thus *Solon's* Laws were ſaid to come from *Minerva*; *Lycurgus* derived his Laws from *Jupiter*; *Numa Pompilius*, the firſt Founder of the *Roman* Rites and Ceremonies, declar'd he received them from the Goddeſs *Ægeria*; and *Mahomet* pretended his Religion was imparted

parted to him, by the Angel *Gabriel*. There is not any thing whatſoever, that derives ſo great an Authority amongſt Men, as the opinion of Divine Favour, or Heavenly Deſignation: And therefore St. *Auſtine*, ſpeaking of that Cuſtome amongſt the *Heathen*, of deriving the Pedigree of their *Heroes* from the Gods, ſays, That he lookt upon it to be of great uſe; in as much as it made valiant Men, fancying themſelves to be Heaven-born, upon the confidence thereof, to undertake high attempts the more boldly, intend them the more earneſtly, and accompliſh them the more ſucceſsfully. And *Ludovicus Vives* ſays, That another great advantage which accrued to the *Heroes* by this Belief, was the readineſs which hereupon they found in the common People to ſubmit to whatſoever they commanded, as thinking their very Commands to be Sacred, and Divine. This therefore made *Scipio*, that he cultivated and improv'd that opinion of the People, *viz.*

That he was begot by ſome God; and *Alexander* in *Lucian* tells us, That it further'd him in many great deſigns, to be accounted the Son of *Jupiter Hammon*; for hereby he was fear'd, and none durſt oppoſe him, whom they held to be a *God*. Thus we ſee, that that piece of Policy, which many of our Court-Flatterers in the late Reigns have been ſo fond of, *viz.* Their aſſerting Monarchy to be *Jure Divino*, is but borrow'd from this old *Heathen* Cuſtom; the Original deſign whereof was, firſt to flatter the Prince, by making him believe his Power was abſolute, and his Will was uncontrolable; and then to impoſe upon the People, by making them believe, That a Prince (though a Tyrant, and the very worſt of Men) was not to be oppos'd or reſiſted. But from what I have now ſaid, let no man think I am an Enemy to Monarchy; for I do moſt Solemnly, and Unfeignedly declare, That of all ſorts of Governments, Monarchy is the moſt agreeable to my

my Genius; and that of Monarchies, the pure and unmixt would pleaſe me beſt (it being that by which the Almighty governs the Univerſe) could Humane Nature be long truſted with it; and could we be as certain, that his Vicegerents on Earth would as eaſily imitate thoſe Divine Attributes of Wiſdom and Goodneſs, as they are prone to lay claim to his other Attribute of Power and Greatneſs. But alas, Kings are but Men; they are not exempted from Error; They have their Vices and Infirmities, their Sallies and Enormites, like the reſt of Mankind: And indeed, conſidering the unhappineſs of their Education, and their being continually ſurrounded with Sycophants and Flatterers, 'tis a wonder they prove at the common rate of other Men. Hence therefore that great Man of Wiſdom and Experience, *Phillip de Comines* tell us, *That a Vertuous Prince is worthy of more than ordinary applauſe.* Thus (as a late ingenious Author obſerves) the fault is not in the

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Government as *Abſolute*, but in *Humane Nature*, which is not often found ſufficient, at leaſt for above one or two Succeſſions, to ſupport and manage ſo unlimited a Power in one ſingle Perſon, as it ought to be. And now, to return to my Subject. Since Learning therefore is a thing of ſo little value, and uſe to Mankind, as we have made it appear to be; how vain are thoſe, who extol it to ſuch a degree, as to make it the Standard both of Happineſs and Wiſdom; by concluding, that no Man can be either happy, or Wiſe without it: Though the Scripture tells us, That he who encreaſeth in Knowledge, encreaſeth in Sorrow; and daily Experience ſhews us, That folly and Learning do often Cohabit in the ſame Perſon. The ingenious *Montaigne*, enquiring into the reaſon, why Men of Learning do generally ſeem to be more uncouth in their Diſcourſe, as alſo more unfit for buſineſs than other Men, ſaith, *I cannot conceive the true Cauſe hereof, unleſs*

unleſs it be, that as Plants are choakt by over-much Moiſture, and Lamps are ſtifled with too much Oile; So are the Actions of the mind overwhelm'd by over-abundance of matter and Study: And in a diverſity of Things, as in a miſt, the Mind is apt to loſe it ſelf. Thus we ſee that Learning is ſo far from contributing to Wiſdom, that if it be not well manag'd, it really hinders us in the purſuit of it. And a great part of that which we call Learning, is like Cobwebs, which though they ſeem fine and artificial, are of no manner of uſe. For what is a Man the wiſer for knowing the Genitive Caſe in *Jupiter*? Or whether we ſhould write *Fælix*, or *Felix*; or what are we the better for knowing how many knots there were in *Hercules*'s Club; or whether *Penelope* was honeſt or no? And yet as ridiculous as theſe things are, Many of thoſe Men, whom the World hath call'd Learned, have trifled away their time in theſe, and ſuch like Enquiries. In a word, it is not the

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the knowing much, but the knowing what is uſeful, makes a Man a Wiſe Man. And therefore if a Man have all other Points of Knowledge and Learning, yet if he wants that one of *Sibi Sapere*, all his other Knowledge is but Impertinence, and a gawdy ſort of Ignorance. There are indeed ſome Men, who are arriv'd to a ſort of *Lip-Wiſdom*, as I may ſo call it; who have a knack of talking like Wiſe Men: By their Diſcourſe you would judge of them, as the Ancient *Heathens* did of their *Heroes*, That they were ſprung from the Gods; But if you ſearch into their Actions, you would rather think them a-kin to the Horſe or Mule which have no underſtanding. *Odi Homines ignavos operâ, Philoſophos ſententiâ*, was the ſaying of a Great Man; *I hate Men that Act like Fools, but ſpeak like Philoſophers.* He who ſpeaks, but does not Act like a Wiſe Man, is at beſt but like a *Tinkling Cymbal*, which makes only a pleaſant noiſe. Certainly of all

all parts of Wiſdom, the Practick is the beſt. To conclude then, It is not a Man's cloiſtering himſelf up in his Study, nor his continual Poring upon Books, that makes him a Wiſe Man: No; this property is to be acquired only by Meditation and Converſe. For Reading may very properly be compared to Eating, and Meditating to Digeſting; as therefore to one hour Eating, we allow many hours for Digeſting; So to one hours Reading we ſhould aſſign a ſufficient time for Meditating, and Digeſting what we have read. Or elſe, as the one by breeding ill humours, and obſtructing the paſſages, impairs the Health of the Body; So will the other be of no leſs prejudice to the underſtanding, by occaſioning Diſeaſes to the mind. Thus do many Men, through their not obſerving this Rule, inſtead of improving, really impair themſelves by their Studies. For by over-much Reading they clog and oppreſs their Minds, and ſo digeſt nothing. They ſtuff

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ſtuff themſelves ſo full of other Mens Notions, that there is no room for their Faculties to diſplay themſeves. Whereas the Man of Thought and Meditation, moves in a larger Sphere: He does not thus pinion his Fancy, but puts it upon the Wing, which ſeldom returns home without ſome noble Quarry. And did Men but know, how much the pleaſure of Thinking tranſcends all other pleaſures, they would certainly put a greater value upon it. For nothing is comparable to the pleaſure of an active, and a prevailing Thought: a Thought prevailing over the difficulty and obſcurity of the Object, and refreſhing the Soul with new Diſcoveries, and Images of things, and thereby extending the bounds of Apprehenſion, and (as it were) enlarging the Territories of Reaſon. But the Learned Man that daily plods on in his Reading, and that never makes uſe of this thinking Faculty, by reflecting upon what he hath read, quite loſeth this *Intel-*

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lectual Enjoyment; Nor is he ſenſible of that *Suaviſſima Vita*, as the Poet calls it, of *Deſcending into himſelf, and being daily ſenſible of his own Improvement*: But like the Carriers Horſe, he ſtill keeps the old Track; and his Learning (to continue the Simile) like the Pack is but a Burthen to the Beaſt that carries it. But now, after all that hath been ſaid againſt Learning, thus much I muſt own, and acknowledge, That Learning when it meets with an ingenuous temper, and is joyn'd to a pregnancy of mind, is then of excellent uſe and Advantage: For there is no Man but will ſpeak the better, where he knows what others have ſaid upon the ſame ſubject. And ſometimes the Conſciouſneſs of his inward knowledge, gives a graceful Confidence to his outward behaviour. But on the other hand, if Learning happens to be in the poſſeſſion of a Fool, 'tis then but a Bawble, and, like Dr. *Donne's Sun-Dial in the Grave*, a trifle, and of no uſe.

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ESSAY III.

Of Education, and Cuſtome; The great Influence it hath upon moſt Men. But that a good Education is not always Effectual.

WE ſuck in the firſt Rudiments as we do the common Air [*facili hauſtu*] as the *Lord Bacon* expreſſeth it, *without Diſcrimination* or *Election*, of which indeed our tender, and unexerciſed Minds are not capable. And, I confeſs, 'tis neceſſary we ſhould do ſo; nor were there any hurt in this innocent eaſineſs, did not moſt Men *all their Lives* worſhip the *firſt* thing they ſaw in the *Morning* of their *Days*, and ever after obſtinately adhere to thoſe unexamined Receptions. But this is the miſchief, when we are Children we are apt to believe every thing; and when we are grown Men, we ſeldom examine Things, but ſettle in their *firſt Impreſſions*, without giving our

our ſelves the trouble to conſider, and review them. And theſe prejudices, by Cuſtom and long Acquaintance with our Souls, get a mighty Intereſt, and ſhut them up againſt every thing that is different from thoſe Images of Education.

Quô ſemel eſt imbuta recens, ſervabit odorem
Teſta diu——

ſaid the Heathen Poet; the firſt ſeaſoning Principles and Prejudices, which we receive in our Youth, ſtick cloſely to us for a long time after. The Wiſe Philoſopher tells us, That the Soul of Man is *Raſa Tabula*, like a white Sheet of *Paper*, out of which therefore it muſt be more than common Art, that can ſo clear take out the firſt Writing, as to ſuper-induce a new Copy fair and legible. This is the true reaſon why any Perſon finds it ſo difficult to quit thoſe Notions of Religion, which have been eſtabliſhed in his mind from

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from his early Infancy. There is a marvellous agreement, and natural kindneſs to thoſe Opinions, which we ſuck in with our Milk; They are like *Foſter-Brothers*, to whom it has been obſerved, There is as ſtrong an Inclination as to the *Natural*; we play and converſe with them from our *Cradles*, and as ſoon as we can go alone, we take them by the *hand*; we ſleep with them in our boſoms, and contract an inſenſible *Friendſhip* with them, a pleaſing *Familiarity*, which takes off all Deformities; we love them, and we like them, and their very *Blackneſs* is a *Beauty*, as it is with the *African Nations*, to whom even that which we judge Deformity, appears more lovely than the moſt delicate *European Beauty*. Thus it was truly ſaid of *Philo*, *That every Mans own Religion ſeemed to him the beſt, becauſe he judgeth of it not by reaſon, but by affection*; like thoſe Philoſophers, of whom *Cicero* ſpake, who liked no Diſcipline but their own. Hence we find

find, that the beſt account many can give of their Faith, is, that they were bred in it; And the moſt are driven to their Religion by Cuſtom and Education, as the *Indians* are to Baptiſm, that is, like a Drove of Cattel to the Water. Thus do we judge all things by our anticipations, and condemn, or applaud them, as they differ, or agree, with our firſt opinions. 'Tis on this account that almoſt every Country cenſures the Laws, Cuſtoms, and Doctrines of every other, as abſurd, and unreaſonable, and are confirmed in their own follies beyond poſſibility of Conviction. In a word, there is nothing ſo abſurd, to which Education cannot form our tender Youth; It can turn us into ſhapes more Monſtrous than thoſe of *Africk*. For in our Childhood, we are like the melted Wax to the prepared Seal, capable of any Impreſſion from the documents of our Teachers. The *Half-Moon*, or *Croſs*, are indifferent to us; and with the ſame eaſe can we write

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on this *Raſa Tabula*, Turk or Chriſtian. Hence therefore it is, That we find no Religion ſo irrational, but can boaſt of its Martyrs; Nor no Opinion ſo ſilly and ridiculous, but has had ſome Philoſopher or other to ſupport and defend it. And becauſe there is not any thing more ſtrange, than the great diverſity of Laws and Cuſtoms in the World; I ſhall not here think it impertinent to tranſcribe ſome of thoſe which are moſt remarkable; as for Inſtance, To account it a moſt pious and Religious Act, to kill their Parents, when they come to ſuch an Age; and then to eat them: In one and the ſame Nation Virgins go with their Privy Parts uncovered, and married Women carefully cover and conceal them: Where Children are excluded, and Brothers and Nephews only inherit: Where Chaſtity, in unmarried Women, is in no eſteem; for ſuch may proſtitute themſelves to as many as they pleaſe, and being got with Child, may lawfully take Phyſick

ſick to make themſelves miſcarry; but Married Women keep themſelves Chaſt and Faithful to their Husbands. Where the Cuſtom was, that every Bride ſhould be proſtitute to all Comers the firſt Night, and ſhe who had entertain'd moſt, was moſt honoured: Where they have no Marriages, and therefore Children only own their Mothers, not being able to gueſs at their Fathers: Where Bawdy Houſes of Young Men are kept for the Pleaſure of Women, as there are of Women for the Neceſſities of Men: Where the ſervile condition of Women is look'd upon with ſuch contempt, that they kill all the Native Women, and buy Wives of their Neighbours to ſupply their uſe: Where they boil the bodies of their Dead, and afterwards pound them to a pulpe, which they mix with their Wine, and drink it: Where the greateſt Oath they take, is to Swear by the Name of ſome Dead Perſon of Reputation, laying their hand upon his Tomb: Where the

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ordinary way of Salutation is, by putting a finger down to the Earth, and then pointing it up towards Heaven: Where it is the Faſhion to turn their backs upon him they ſalute, and never look upon the Man they intend to honour: Where, whenever the King ſpits, the greateſt Ladies of his Court put out their hands to receive it: and where alſo the moſt eminent Perſons about him ſtoop to take up his Ordure in a Linnen Cloth. Thus have I Collected, and Copied out ſeveral of thoſe Cuſtoms, which to me ſeem the moſt extravagant, and uncouth; whereby it plainly appears, that there is no Opinion or Imagination ſo idle or ridiculous, which is not eſtabliſhed by Laws and Cuſtoms, in ſome place or other. Thus, in a word, do we ſee the mighty power of Cuſtom and Education; which is ſo great, that the rankeſt follies are counted Sacred, if Cuſtomary: And the Faſhion is always handſom and agreeable, though never ſo uncouth,

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or ridiculous to an indifferent Beholder. In ſhort, we are civil or uncivil, good or bad, fooliſh or wiſe, or any thing elſe according to Cuſtom, which *Eraſmus* calls the *Monoſyllable Tyrant*, becauſe 'tis form'd *Mos* in Latine; though *Pindar* ſtiles her *the Queen and Empreſs of the World*. *Seneca* ſays, That we govern our ſelves not by Reaſon, but by Cuſtom, accounting that moſt honeſt, which is moſt practiſed; and Errour ſerves us for a Law, when it is become publick. Cuſtom we know is of ſo great account among *Phyſicians*, that according to the great *Hippocrates*, there is no one thing ought more to be regarded: Nay, ſays he, whatſoever a Man is us'd to (altho' it be bad) is leſs harmful than what we are not accuſtomed to, although in it ſelf it be better. And among the Lawyers we ſee, there is nothing more eſteemed of than Cuſtom: Preſcription is always counted the beſt Title; and the Common Law, which is nothing but ſeveral Cuſtoms eſta-

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bliſhed by time and experience, has always the preference of Statute-Law, and is eſteem'd the Nobler part. Again, Cuſtom governs our very Affections; and we love rather by Cuſtom, than by Reaſon. Hence Mothers more tenderly affect their Children with whom they commonly converſe, more than Fathers do; and Nurſes more than ſome Mothers. Cuſtom hath likewiſe ſuch a Power over the Imagination, that when we are aſleep, we often dream of thoſe things, which our minds moſt run upon when we are awake. And what a mighty Influence has it upon the outward Senſes? which may be perceived in thoſe Perſons, who (after they have been for ſome time kept in a dark place) come into a full and open light; not being able to bear that luminous Body, which by its glaring ſeems to dazle and offend their ſight. And hence it is, That thoſe who live near the *Cataracts* of *Nile*, as alſo thoſe ſeveral Tradeſmen whoſe noiſe diſpleaſes us

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ſo much, and who dwell in Mills and Forges, Cuſtom has made it ſo familiar to them, that they are no ways diſturbed with this conſtant clattering, but reſt and ſleep as quietly with noiſe, as others do without it. Thus doth Cuſtom ſufficiently ſhew its own Force and Power, which is ſtronger than Nature, inaſmuch as it both alters and deſtroys Nature, and is ſo powerful that it cannot be deſtroyed but by it ſelf. To conclude then, the Power of Cuſtom is much greater than moſt men imagine; and therefore it is, that through miſtake we often call that the Law of Nature, which really is but the effect of Cuſtom. That affection, which we ſay every Man naturally bears to his own Country, whence comes it? Is it not from Cuſtom? I know indeed, ſome tell us, that this love to our Native Soil, is by the inſtinct of Nature, as Beaſts love their Dens, and Birds their Neſts. But I rather think it is from civil inſtitution, as being accuſtomed to

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the ſame Laws, the ſame Ceremonies, the ſame Temples, the ſame Markets, and the ſame Tribunals. No wonder then, that the Generality of Mankind is ſo influenced by Cuſtom, ſince that Idea which moſt Men have of Truth and Reaſon, is no other, than what Cuſtom diſpenſeth to them. And hence it is, that we often are ſo ſtrangely deluded, and impoſed upon. *For Cuſtom*, ſays *Montaigne*, *veils from us the true aſpect of things. Miracles appear to be ſo, according to our ignorance of Nature, and not according to the eſſence of Nature. The continually being accuſtomed to any thing, blinds the eye of our Judgment.* Hence therefore it is, That as the *Greeks* and *Romans* formerly called all *Barbarians*, who followed not their Laws and Faſhions; ſo we ſtill keep up the ſame humour, by judging all thoſe who differ from us in their Cuſtoms and Uſages, to be at leaſt Ridiculous, if not Barbarous. Though (after all) the *Barbarians* are no more a wonder to us, than we are

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to them; nor (it may be) with any more reaſon. Thoſe *Americans*, who kill their old decrepit Parents, inſtead of believing themſelves Parricides, call us cruel for letting ours continue ſo long in the Miſeries of old Age: And as for that Practice of theirs (which to us ſeems ſo unnatural) of eating their own Parents, they think they do thereby give them the moſt noble ſort of *Sepulture*, by burying them in their own Bodies, in a manner reviving them again, and regenerating them by a kind of Tranſmutation into their Living Fleſh, by the means of Digeſtion and Nouriſhment. And to ſay the Truth, there are many Laws and Cuſtomes, which ſeem at the firſt view to be ſavage, inhumane, and contrary to all Reaſon, which if they were without paſſion, and ſoberly conſider'd, though they were not found to be altogether juſt and good, yet at leaſt they might be plauſibly defended by ſome kind of Reaſon. A wiſe Man therefore ought

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to ſuſpend his Judgement, and not to be over-forward in Cenſuring and Condemning the Practices and Cuſtoms of other Nations: which ſort of narrowneſs I find many are ſubject to, and with the *Hermite*, are apt to think the *Sun* Shines no where, but in their *Cell*; and that all the World is darkneſs but themſelves. But this certainly is to meaſure Truth by a wrong Standard, and to Circumſcribe her by too narrow a Scantling. But to proceed, Since Cuſtom hath ſo great a ſway in all our Actions, we may well look upon it, as *another Nature*; nay, ſometimes we ſee it Conquers Nature; Thus by Cuſtom did *Mithridates* render Poyſon ſo familiar to himſelf, that it loſt its noxious Quality; and we find whole Nations in *India*, that live upon Toads, Lizards, and Spiders. Cuſtom then is no ſlight thing; it is that which ought in the firſt place to be regarded, ſince it exerciſes ſo abſolute dominion over us. *Plato* reproving a Boy for playing

ing at ſome Childiſh Game, Thou reproveſt me (ſays the Boy) for a very little thing: *Cuſtom* (replyed *Plato*) *is no little Thing. And* (ſays *Montaigne*) *He was in the right; for I find our greateſt Vices derive their firſt Propenſity from our moſt tender Infancy, and that our Principal Education depends upon the Nurſe.* And therefore ſince Education carries ſo great force and Authority along with it, how much does it behove ſuch Parents, who have any regard to Vertue and Wiſdom, to give their Children a vertuous and ſober Education? though (indeed) this does not always prove ſucceſsful. For *Nero*, notwithſtanding his two excellent Tutors, *Seneca* and *Burrhas*, receiv'd but little Improvement. *Cicero*'s Son to the ſtupidity of his Nature, added Drunkenneſs, and return'd from *Athens* and *Cratippus* as great a Blockhead as he went. *Marcus Aurelius* provided fourteen of the moſt approved Maſters to Educate *Commodus*, yet could not rectifie his froward

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froward and Barbarous humour. Thus, as Sir *Henry Wotton* obſerves, There is in ſome Tempers ſuch a natural Barrenneſs, that like the Sands of *Arabia* they are never to be cultivated, or improved. And according to the old proverb, *Ex quovis ligno non fit Mercurius*——There are ſome Crab-Stocks of ſuch a nature, that all the Ingrafting in the World can never correct or amend. But theſe Monſters of Nature are not often to be met with: For we uſually obſerve, that the Culture of the mind, as of the Earth, doth deliver it from the Barrenneſs of its Nature; And that the toughеſt, and moſt unbended Natures, by early and prudent Diſcipline, may be much corrected and improved.

ESSAY IV.

Of the Ancients: *And the Reſpect that is due unto them: That we ſhould not too much enſlave our ſelves to their Opinions.*

AS we ſhould not be ſo fondly conceited of our ſelves, and the extraordinary Abilities of the Preſent Age, as to think every thing that is Ancient to be obſolete; or, as if it muſt needs be with Opinions, as it is with Cloaths, where the neweſt is for the moſt part beſt; ſo neither ſhould we be ſo Superſtitiouſly devoted to Antiquity, as to take every thing for *Canonical*, which drops from the Pen of a Father, or was approved by the Conſent of the Ancients. Antiquity is ever venerable, and juſtly challenges Honour, and Reverence; but yet there is difference between Reverence and Superſtition; We may aſſent unto them as Ancients, but not as Oracles; They

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They may have our minds eaſie and inclinable, but there is no reaſon they ſhould have them Captivated and Fetter'd to their Opinions. As I will not diſtruſt all which without manifeſt Proof they deliver, where I cannot convince them of Error; ſo likewiſe will I ſuſpend my Belief upon probability of their Miſtakes; and where I find reaſon to diſſent, I will rather reſpect *Truth* than Authority. As there may be Friendſhip, ſo there may be Honour, with diverſity of Opinions; nor are we bound therefore to deifie Men, becauſe we reverence them. We wrong our Anceſtors more by admiring than oppoſing them in their Errours; and our opinion of them is very diſhonourable, if we think they had rather have us followers of them, than of Truth. The greateſt reſpect we can ſhew the Ancients, is by following their Example; which was not *Supinely* and *Superſtitiouſly* to ſit down in fond admiration of the Learning of thoſe that were before them;

them; but to examine their Writings, to avoid their miſtakes, and to uſe their Diſcoveries, in order to the further Improvement of Knowledge: This they did; and never any Man took a greater Liberty in cenſuring and reproving the ſuppoſed Errors and Miſtakes of the Elder Philoſophers, than *Ariſtotle* himſelf; And therefore I do not ſee any reaſon, why he ſhould be allow'd greater priviledge, than what he himſelf thought good to allow to thoſe before him. *Veritas nec mea eſt, nec illius, aut ullius*, ſays *Saint Auſtine*, No man can ſay I am infallible; for as we are men, ſo we are ſubject to Error. As for the *Truth* of Things, Time makes no Alteration; Things are ſtill the ſame they are, let the time be paſt, preſent, or to come. Thoſe things which we Reverence for Antiquity, what were they at their firſt Birth? Were they falſe? Time cannot make them true: Were they true? Time cannot make them more true. The Circumſtance therefore

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of Time, in reſpect of Truth and Errour, is meerly impertinent. For as Antiquity cannot priviledge an Error, ſo Novelty cannot prejudice Truth. I know in all Ages there have been thoſe, who with a great deal of zeal and Elegance have declaim'd againſt *New Things*, ſetting forth the great danger of *Alteration* and *Novelty*. But let us not be frightn'd with Shadows: If to be the Author of *New Things*, be a Crime; how will the firſt Civilizers of *Men*, and makers of *Laws*, and Founders of *Governments* eſcape? Whatever now delights us in the Works of *Nature*, that excels the rudeneſs of the firſt Creation, is *New*. Whatever we ſee in Cities, or Houſes, above the firſt Wildneſs of Fields, and meanneſs of Cottages, and Nakedneſs of Men, had its time, when this imputation of *Novelty* might as well have been laid to its charge. It is not therefore an Offence, to introduce *New Things*, unleſs that which is introduced prove pernicious

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in it ſelf; or cannnot be brought in, without the extirpation of others, that are better. If *Novelty* ſhould always be rejected, neither would Arts have arrived to that perfection, wherein now we enjoy them, nor could we ever hope for any future Reformation: though all Truth be in it ſelf Eternal; yet in reſpect of Mens Opinions, there is ſcarce any ſo Ancient, but had a beginning, and was once counted a *Novelty*; and if for this reaſon it had been condemned as an Error, what a general darkneſs and ignorance would then have been in the World, in Compariſon of that Light which now abounds. The great Architect of the World hath been obſerv'd not to throw down all Gifts and Knowledge to Mankind confuſedly at once, but in a regular Parſimonious method, to diſperſe them by certain degrees, periods, and progreſs of time, leaving Man to make induſtrious reſearches and inveſtigations after Truth; *He left the World to the*

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Diſputations of Men, as the wiſeſt of Men ſays, who in acquiſition of Natural Truths went from the Hyſope to the Cedar; *One day certifieth another*, and one Age rectifieth another, and the Morrow hath more Experience than the preceeding day. Thoſe times which we term Vulgarly the Old World, was indeed the *Youth* of it, and though if reſpect be had to the particular and perſonal Acts of Generation, and to the relation of Father and Son, they who fore-liv'd and preceeded us may be called our *Anceſtors*, yet if you go to the Age of the World in general, and to the true length and longævity of Things, we are more properly *The Ancients*, and the preſent Age is the greateſt Antiquity: Hence, as the Lord *Bacon* obſerves, we generally have a wrong notion of *Antiquity*; *For* (ſays he) *to ſpeak truly*, *Antiquitas Seculi*, *Juventus Mundi*; That which we commonly call *Antiquity*, is but the Nonage of the World: And in this reſpect the younger

younger Brother may be term'd more Ancient than his Elder, becauſe the World was older when he entred into it. The admiring of former Ages, was a Vanity that poſſeſs'd all times as well as ours; and the *Golden Age* was never *the preſent*. They who went before us, have not prevented us, but have opened a door, that we may enter into the Receſſes of Truth: He that comes laſt hath certainly the beſt advantage in the Inquiry. Our Anceſtors have done wiſely and well in their Generations, but they have not done all; much work ſtill remains behind, and he that lives a thouſand Ages hence, ſhall not have reaſon to complain, that there are no hidden Truths fit for him to enquire after. There are more Worlds to conquer: Every day brings a new Light, and by a wiſe and careful Labour we may improve what our Fore-Fathers ſpy'd, when they peept through the Creviſes. If the latter Ages could be abſtracted from the mixtures of In-

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tereſt, and the Engagement of their Party, they are in many things better able to teach the People, than the Ancients. There is certainly a truer, and more certain Knowledge of Things now than formerly: But that which ſpoils all is, Men are grown a great deal more cunning, and few there are, who take any other aim, than that of Intereſt; So that hence it is, that many times it proves ſafer to rely on the Authority of former Ages, though more ignorant, than of later Ages, which though more knowing, yet more dangerous to follow, in reſpect of that Deſign and Artifice, which now a days Men uſe, on purpoſe to promote their own private Intereſt. In ſhort, it behoves every one in the ſearch of Truth, always to preſerve a Philoſophical liberty: Not to be ſo enſlaved to the Opinion of any Man, as to think whatever he ſays to be be infallible. We muſt labour to find out what things are in themſelves by our own Experience and

and a through examination of their Natures, not what another ſays of them. *Non tam authoritas in diſputando, quàm rationis momenta quærenda ſunt*, ſaid *Cicero*; A Man ought not ſo much to regard the Perſon who ſpeaks, as the Thing that is ſpoken. But it is the unhappy humour of too many Men, *jurare in verba Magiſtri*, ſervilely to tye themſelves to the Authority of particular Men, and to ſee with other Mens Spectacles: The greateſt part of the World being rather led with the Names of their Maſters, and with the Reverend reſpect they bear their Perſons or Memories, than with the Soundneſs and Truth of the Things they teach. Men firſt take up a Confidence of the Learning or Sanctity of a Perſon, and then all his Notions are receiv'd implicitely, and are ſtrictly embraced, without the leaſt examination: And this Admiration of Mens Perſons, has in all Ages been of huge miſchief, and very pernicious; It has nurs'd up pri-

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vate fancies into Solemn publick Errors, and given an unhappy Perpetuity to many Heterodox Opinions, which would elſe have expir'd with their firſt Defenders. Men do not any where more eaſily erre, than where they follow a Guide, whom they preſume they may ſafely truſt. Belief, without evidence of Reaſon, muſt be only there abſolute, where the Authority is unqueſtionable; and where it is impoſſible to erre, there only it is impious to diſtruſt. As for Mens Aſſertions, *Quibus poſſibile eſt ſubeſſe falſum*, what one ſaid of Friendſhip, *Sic ama tanquam oſurus*, Love with that Wiſdom, as to remember you may be provoked to the Contrary, is more warrantable and advantagious in Knowledge, *Sic crede tanquam diſſenſurus*, ſo to believe, as to be ready, when Cauſe requires, to diſſent. It is a too much ſtraitning of a Man's own underſtanding, to enthral it unto any; And beſides, there is not any thing which hath bred more diſtempers in the

the Body of Learning, than Factions and Sidings; when as *Seneca* ſaid of *Cato*. That he would rather eſteem Drunkenneſs a Virtue, than *Cato* Vicious. To conclude, There is no one thing hath more ſtunted the growth of Learning, than a ſtiff adhering to the dictates of the Ancients; For he who makes *Plato* or *Ariſtotle* the Standard of Humane Knowledge, cannot poſſibly tranſcend the Learning of *Plato* or *Ariſtotle*; the utmoſt he can do, he may come up to that height, but (like water) he can never riſe higher than the Source. Now if we enquire the reaſon why the *Mathematicks*, and *Mechanick Arts*, have ſo much got the ſtart in growth of other Sciences; this may very well be thought to be one conſiderable cauſe of it, That their Progreſs hath not been retarded by this Reverential awe of former Diſcoveries: Herein Men have acted freely, without laying any reſtraint upon themſelves, or Embargo upon their Intellectuals:

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No man ever thought it an Hereſie to out-limn *Apelles*, or to out-work the *Obelisks*: It was never imputed to *Galilæus* as a Crime, That he ſaw further than the Ancients, and that he choſe rather to believe his own Eyes, than either *Ariſtotle* or *Ptolomy*. Thoſe famous *Optick Glaſſes*, which are now ſo ſerviceable to us, are not a jot the leſs valued, becauſe they were not us'd by the Ancients; nor do we give the leſs credit to their Informations, becauſe they were *hid from Ages*. The Polar Vertue of the *Loadſtone*, was unknown to the Ancients; this was reſerv'd for latter days; and yet no Man is ſo ſilly, to think the vaſt advantages, which accrue to Mankind by that noble Invention, are (therefore) the leſs to be eſteem'd. And had the Author of that Invention (one *Flavius Goia*, a *Neapolitane*, who liv'd about three hundred years ago) been of this narrow Principle, *That we are not to tranſcend the Bounds of the Ancients*; we muſt then (for

(for want of this Diſcovery) have committed our ſelves to the ſole conduct of the Stars; and (as the Ancients did) muſt we always have been creeping near the Shoar: Then the fourth part of the Earth had been yet unknown, and *Hercules*'s *Pillars* had ſtill been the Worlds *Ne ultra*: *Seneca*'s Prophecy had been an *unfulfilled* Prediction, and one moiety of our Globes an empty Hemiſphere.

ESSAY V.

Whether the Men of this preſent Age are any way inferiour to thoſe of former Ages, either in reſpect of Vertue, Learning, or long Life.

THat the World doth daily decline, is an Opinion ſo *Univerſally* believ'd, that whoever goes about to defend the Contrary, preſently ſhall be thought to maintain a Paradox. But that thing call'd *Univerſality*

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Univerſality, is ſo ſlight an Evidence of Truth, that even Truth it ſelf is aſham'd of it; For what is *Univerſality* but a quainter word to ſignifie the *Multitude*? Now Humane Authority at the ſtrongeſt is but weak, but the *Multitude* is the weakeſt part of Humane Authority: It is the great Patron of Error, the moſt eaſily abus'd, and the moſt hardly diſabus'd. The beginning of Error may be, and generally is, from Private Perſons, but the maintainer and Continuer of Error is the *Multitude*. To infer the truth of a Religion, from the Number of its Profeſſors, is falſely to conclude the fineneſs of the Cloth from the largeneſs of the Meaſure. How vain and Ridiculous then is it in the *Papiſts*, who think this argument of *Univerſality*, ſo invincible a Proof of the truth of their Religion. If *Multitude* be an Argument that Men are in the right, in vain then hath the Scripture ſaid, *Thou ſhall not follow a Multitude to do evil*: For if this Argument

Argument ſignifie any thing, the greater Number can never be in the wrong. Indeed could wiſhing do any good, I could wiſh well to this kind of Proof; *Sed nunquam ita bene erit rebus humanis, ut plures ſint meliores*, It will never go ſo well with Mankind, that the *Moſt* ſhall be the *Beſt*. In ſhort, the beſt that can be ſaid of Argument and Reaſon drawn from *Univerſality* and *Multitude*, is this, ſuch Reaſon may perhaps ſerve well to excuſe an *Error*, but it can never ſerve to warrant a *Truth*. Notwithſtanding therefore, that the opinion of the World's conſtant Declining is ſo firmly radicated in the minds of moſt Men, yet this is no ſufficient reaſon, why we ſhould acquieſce in ſuch a belief; Nor can any thing be more unphiloſophical, than an Implicite Faith in this matter. And therefore we ſhall now preſume to enter upon the Subject. There are two extreams common amongſt Men: the one proper to young Men, who always value themſelves above their Predeceſſors,

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Predeceſſors, and like *Rehoboam*, think their own little finger ſtronger than the whole Body of their Fathers; the other peculiar to Old Men, who always extol the time paſt above the preſent. *To ſpeak impartially, Old Men*, ſays Dr. Brown, *from whom we ſhould expect the greateſt Example of Wiſdom, do moſt exceed in this point of folly; Commending the days of their Youth, which they ſcarce remember, at leaſt well underſtood not; extolling thoſe times, which in their younger Years they heard their Fathers condemn, and condemning thoſe times, which the Gray Heads of their Poſterity ſhall commend.* And that Old Men always were of this temper, we may underſtand from *Horace*, who makes the ſame Complaint of them. Now, the reaſon why Old Men are ſo much out of humour with the preſent times, I take to be this; They being for the moſt part much alter'd from what they were in their Youth, as to their temper and Complexion, and being full of ſad Melancholly

Melancholly thoughts, this makes them think the World is chang'd, whereas in truth the Change is in themſelves. It fares with them in this Caſe, as with thoſe whoſe Mouth is out of taſt, or whoſe Eyes are bloodſhot, or are troubled with the Jaundiſe, the one imagining all things bitter or ſour, which they taſt, and the other red or yellow which they ſee.

Virg. Æn. 3. Terræq; Urbeſque recedunt.

Themſelves being launch'd out into the Deep, the Trees and Houſes ſeem to go backward, whereas really the Motion is in themſelves, the Houſes and Trees ſtill ſtanding where they were. *Seneca* tells us a pleaſant Story of *Harpaſte* his Wife's Fool, who being all of a ſudden ſtruck blind, would by no means be perſwaded of her own blindneſs, but ſtill cry'd out how dark the Room was grown. Such for the moſt part is the Caſe of Old Men, who, by reaſon

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reaſon of the Infirmities of their Bodies and Minds, no longer finding the ſame guſt and pleaſure in the delights of the World, that they found in their Youth, lay the fault upon the World, inſtead of imputing the ſame to themſelves, as they ought to do. For God creates not Souls now with leſs advantages than formerly; He is as liberal of his Favours to us of this Generation, as ever he was to any before us; And Nature being ſtill as wiſe and powerful as heretofore, and the Univerſal Cauſes the ſame, their Operations muſt be likewiſe as perfect, and their Effects as excellent in theſe days, as they have been in any. Let not Men therefore deceive themſelves, and think that we live in the Dregs of Time, and what mighty advantages the *Ancients* (as they call them) had over us; for if Antiquity be to have the preference, the advantage will (then) be of our ſide; For Antiquity conſiſts in the old Age of the World, not in the youth of it. 'Tis we

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are the Fathers, and of more Authority than former Ages; becauſe we have the Advantage of more time than they had, and Truth (we ſay) is the Daughter of Time. And beſides, our Minds are ſo far from being impar'd, that they improve more and more in acuteneſs; and being of the ſame Nature with thoſe of the Ancients, have ſuch an advantage beyond them, as a Pigmy hath upon the Shoulders of a Gyant; from whence he beholds not only as much, but more than his Supporter doth. But ſince the Queſtion now to be handled, is rather of *Fact* than of *Right*, the beſt way of diſcuſſing it, will be by comparing the paſt Ages with the preſent, and that in theſe three Reſpects, of Vertue, Learning, and long Life.

1. Firſt then, if we ſurvey the Vices of former Times, they will certainly appear more Barbarous and Epidemical, than ſuch as now Reign in the World. Even to this day, do we not eſteem it an unparalell'd piece

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piece of wickedneſs, That no ſtranger could enter *Sodom*, without being defiled by the Luſt of the more than bruitiſh Citizens? A Crime ſo foul, that nothing but Fire and Brimſtone could purge the ſtench of it from the World. After this, among the *Ægyptians* was that of the *Strawleſs Tax*. The *Græcians* under their wiſeſt Lawgivers approv'd of Theft, if it were committed with Art and Cunning. And Drunkenneſs was ſo uſual a Vice among them, that from thence *Pergræcari*, ſignifies *to be mad with Drink*. The *Romans* had two Rules of Drinking, which they commonly obſerv'd; The one was, to Drink down the Evening Star, and Drink up the Morning Star, *ad Diurnam ſtellam matutinam potantes*, ſaith *Plautus*; The other commonly practiſed among them, was the Drinking ſo many Healths, as there were Letters in their Miſtreſſes Name, according to that of *Martial*:

Nævia

Nævia ſex Cyathis, ſeptem Juſtina bibatur,
Quinque Lycas, Lyde quatuor, Ida tribus.

Nor were their very Women free from this exceſs; Nay, *Seneca* aſſures us, that even in Drinking, they ſometimes out-did the Men. But to proceed. Have we any ſo vain as *Xerxes*, that would think to whip the Sea into Calmneſs? or ſo Prodigal as was *Alexander*, who, according to *Plutarch*, ſpent twelve Millions of Talents upon *Hephæſtion*'s Funeral? Such a prodigious Sum, that many queſtion whether at that time the Revenue of the whole World would amount to it. Or, what Prince is there in theſe days ſo profuſely extravagant, as *Heliogabalus*, the Emperour, who was poſſeſs'd rather with a Madneſs, than exceſs of Prodigality; he fill'd his Fiſh-Ponds with Roſe-Water; he ſupplied his Lamps with the precious Balſam, that diſtils from the Trees in *Ara-*

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bia; he wore upon his Shoos Pearls and Precious Stones engraven by the hands of the moſt skilful Artiſts; his Dining-Room was ſtrew'd with Saffron, and his *Portico's* with the duſt of Gold: And he was never known to put on any Garment a ſecond time, whether it was of the richeſt Silk, or woven with Gold. Then as for the Cruelty of former Ages, we ſhall find it many degrees to tranſcend any thing that is done in theſe days; even amongſt the *Jews*, who by their Religion pretended to more preciſeneſs, what more common amongſt them, than Inceſt, Fratricide, Parricide, Sawing Men to Death, and the moſt Barbarous ſorts of Cruelties, oftentimes committed only for the diverſion, and entertainment of Princes? What Action did ever carry in it ſo much of Inhumanity, as that of the thirty *Athenian Tyrants*, who cauſed the Daughters of ſome of the Slain Citizens to dance, in the Blood of their own Parents, who had newly been Murder'd

Murder'd by them? *Lucius Florus* tells us, that the *German* Women, in their Wars with the *Romans*, would very commonly take their naked Sprawling Infants, and throw them in the face of thoſe they fought with; thinking that ſo Inhumane a Spectacle might daunt the *Roman* Courage. Was there ever ſince then, any thing like the *Ten Perſecutions*? What but *Nero's Luxury*, could ever compare with *Nero's Cruelty*? And yet *Domitian*, in one particular, outwent him; for he took delight in ſeeing thoſe Torments executed, which *Nero* but commanded. What ſhall I now ſay of *Servius Galba*, who, when he was in *Spain*, having aſſembled together the Inhabitants of three Cities, to conſult (as he pretended) about their common ſafety, at one ſtroke cut off ſeven thouſand of them, among whom were the very Flower of their Youth? I might alſo tell you of *Licinius Lucullus*, who, contrary to expreſs Articles, put to the Sword twenty thouſand

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of the *Caucæi*, after they had ſurrender'd: And of *Octavianus Auguſtus*, who, after the taking of *Peruſia*, at one Sacrifice offer'd up the lives of three hundred of the Principal Citizens at the Altar of his Uncle *Julius*: And of *Antoninus Caracalla*, who being incenſed againſt the Citizens of *Alexandria* upon the account of ſome jeſts they had made of him, entred into the City in a peaceable manner, and ſummoning before him all the Youth, he ſurrounded them with his Souldiers, who, upon the Signal given, fell immediately upon them, and ſlew every Mothers Son of them; and afterwards uſing the like Cruelty upon the reſt of the Inhabitants, he utterly deſtroy'd that moſt Spacious, and Populous City of *Alexandria*. Thus could I eaſily give many more inſtances, to ſhew the wickedneſs of former Ages, not only in reſpect of their Barbarous Cruelties, but of their other Vices; but I forbear this, ſince I very well know, that the Character of thoſe Times cannot

cannot be better deſcribed, than is already by the *Apoſtles*, in their ſeveral *Epiſtles:* For what a Monſtrous Catalogue of Sins do we meet with in the firſt Chapter to the *Romans*; Sins of ſo deep a dye, and of ſo horrid a nature, and ſuch an Inventory of all ſorts of Wickedneſs, That one might very well imagine the Apoſtle had been rather deſcribing ſome *Viſion of Hell*, than the *Seat of the Roman Empire.* To conclude then this Point, let us not imagine that ever any Age was, or will be free from Vice and Enormities; while Humane Nature continues, there will be Frailties: *Vitia erunt donec Homines erunt*, ſaith *Tacitus*, Vice hath always had a being in the World, and will continue as long as Men are upon Earth. How unreaſonable is it, to think that *Man* can be better out of *Paradiſe*, than he was in it? *Nemo ſine Crimine*, The beſt of Men have their Imperfections. We are no Angels upon Earth, but are always tranſported with ſome In-

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firmity or other; and 'twill be ſo, while theſe frail, fluxible humours reign within us. This as I conceive is that *Black Bean*, which the *Turkiſh Alchoran* ſpeaks of, when they feign, That *Mahomet* being aſleep among the Mountains of the Moon, two Angels deſcended, and ripping open his Breaſt, they took his Heart, and waſh'd it in Snow, and afterwards pull'd out a *Black Bean*, which was the portion of the Devil, and ſo replaced the Heart. All things here below run in a kind of Circle; And as in Arts and Sciences, ſo likewiſe in the Manners of Men there is a Viciſſitude and Revolution. Virtue and Vice have no ſetled Habitation; every Climate hath had its turn: Sometimes one Countrey carries it for Vertue and Learning, and ſometimes another. *Athens*, which was formerly the only place for Learning and Civility, is now quite over-run with Barbariſm and Ignorance. Every Nation hath its *Achme*, or higheſt pitch of Elevation; And when

when once the ſpoke of the Wheel is uppermoſt, it ſoon whurries to the bottom. As a Kingdom riſes in Empire, ſo it enlarges both in Vertue and Vice; and when it declines, ſo the Declenſion of theſe is proportionable. And though as to particular Kingdoms, one time may be either better or worſe than another; yet take the World in Groſs, and lump it together, we ſhall find that Humane Nature is much at the ſame Standard, as it was formerly; And as we commonly obſerve of the Sea, That as it gets in one place, it loſes in another; ſo every Age may make the ſame Obſervation of the Vertues and Vices of Mankind.

2. The next thing to be conſider'd, is, whether former Ages excell'd the Preſent in reſpect of Learning. Of all the Ancients there were none more eſteem'd for Learning than the *Ægyptians*: The old *Ægyptian* Learning was ſo Famous, that the Spirit of God, ſets forth the E-

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minency of *Moſes*'s Knowledge by his skill in it, and the Matchleſsneſs of *Solomon*'s Wiſdom by its exceeding it; And therefore we may very well conclude, that the *Ægyptian* Learning in thoſe days, was converſant about more generous and more uſeful Notices, than afterwards; ſuch as *Geometry*, *Aſtronomy*, *Policy*, *Phyſick*, and other ſuch like Arts, which either were perfective of their Rational Faculties, or did Miniſter to the uſes and Neceſſities of Nature: as is generally reported by all Ancient Hiſtorians. But had the old Primitive Learning of *Ægypt* been the ſame it was in latter Ages, it had been as great a diſparagement to *Moſes*, as 'tis now juſtly reputed a Commendation, That he was accompliſhed in all the *Ægyptian* Learning. and had amounted only to this, That he was a vain trifling, Superſtitious Fellow. And what the *Egyptian* Prieſt objected to the *Greeks*, *That they were always Children*, might be

be more truly applied to themſelves, if it be the property of Children to value trifles. What Childiſh Fooleries their *Hieroglyphicks* were, Learned Men now prove from the loſt labour, and fruitleſs induſtry of *Kircher's Oedipus Ægyptiacus*. Certainly, if they had deſign'd to abuſe and debauch this humour, they could ſcarce have contriv'd more fond and extravagant Emblems; and indeed their Courſeneſs, and unlikeneſs to the things they ſhould reſemble, ſufficiently diſcover them to have been but the rude Eſſays of a Barbarous and undiſciplin'd *Fancy*. *Theſe Hieroglyphicks*, ſays the Learned Biſhop *Wilkins*, *ſeem to be but a ſlight, imperfect Invention, ſuitable to thoſe firſt and ruder Ages; much of the ſame Nature with that* Mexican *way of Writing by Picture, which was a meer Shift they were put to, for want of the Knowledge of Letters. And it ſeems to me queſtionable*, ſays the ſame Author, *whether the Ægyptians did not at firſt uſe their* Hieroglyphicks

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upon the ſame account, namely, for want of Letters. It is ſcarce credible what a mighty noiſe this *Hieroglyphick* way of Philoſophizing hath made, though there is ſo little of ſubſtance in it, and how exceedingly it took in the Infancy of the World; as it is the property of Children, to be taken more with ſenſible Forms, Shadows, or Pictures, which pleaſe the Fancy, than with ſolid Reaſon. Indeed, to a Man that conſiders it, nothing could ever ſeem more prepoſterous to the deſign of Learning, than theſe *Hieroglyphicks*, or Myſtical Repreſentations, which were unavoidably clogg'd with two Inconveniencies, very unſuitable to the propagation of *Knowledge*, which were Obſcurity and Ambiguity: For it not only coſt them a great deal of Time to gather up ſuch *Symbolical* Things, which might repreſent their Conceptions; but when they had pitch'd upon them, they were lyable to a great variety of *Interpretations*, as is evident in all thoſe remainders

remainders of them, preſerved by the Induſtry of ſome Ancient Writers. I cannot therefore imagine any rational Man could think that Study worth his pains, which at the higheſt can amount but to a *Conjecture*; and when it is come to that with a great deal of pains, it is nothing but ſome ordinary and trivial Obſervation. *Certainly* (ſaith the Learned *Stilling fleet*) *this kind of Learning deſerves the higheſt form among the* DIFFICILES NUGÆ, *and all theſe* Hieroglyphicks *put together, will make but one good one, and that ſhould be for* LABOUR LOST. I might here (if it were not too great a Digreſſion) ſhew how very Pernicious the uſe of theſe *Hieroglyphicks* were to the Vulgar, who ſeeing the *Attributes* of *God* repreſented under the ſhapes of *Animals* and *Plants*, took occaſion to adore thoſe Corporeal Things, and ſo became the moſt Superſtitious of all Nations, going ſo far as to deifie *Garlick*, *Onions*, *Rats*, *and Toads*.

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But to proceed: The truth of it is, the *Egyptians* ſeem to have had only Knowledge enough, to know that their Neighbours had none at all, and cunning enough to pretend an inſpection into ſtrange and abſtruſe Myſteries; knowing that others by reaſon of their Ignorance could not controul them, and by reaſon of their Credulity would be very apt to credit them; And thence they continually abus'd the Credulous *Grecians* with Tales and Fables. The Learned *Stillingfleet* tells us, There want not grounds of Suſpicion, that the old *Egyptian* Learning was not of that Elevation, which the preſent diſtance of our Age makes us apt to think it was. And the Learned *Conringius*, in his Book *de Hermeticâ Medicinâ*, hath endeavour'd to ſhew the great defects there were in it. *Nor can it, I think, be denied*, ſaith Stillingfleet, *but according to the reports we have now concerning the old Ægyptian Learning, ſome parts of it were frivolous, others obſcure, a great*

great deal Magical, and the reſt ſhort of that Improvement, which the acceſſion of the parts and induſtry of after Ages gave unto it. It were eaſie to ſhew, how much even thoſe parts of Learning, wherein the *Ægyptians* and the other *Ancients* did moſt excel, have been improved in theſe latter Ages; But this Task having been perform'd by abler Pens, I ſhall only touch upon three Things, ſo very uſeful to Mankind, *viz. Anatomy*, *Geography*, and *Navigation*; to ſhew what a mighty improvement they have received in this laſt Age. Firſt then, as for *Anatomy*; This Art was doubtleſs in very little uſe among the Ancients. I know indeed, there are ſome who tell us, that the *Ægyptians* were very accurate in the Knowledge of *Anatomy*; but when I conſider how exceſſively curious and Ceremonious, or rather Superſtitious they were in preſerving their Bodies entire and unputrified, I cannot but conceive their opening them was rather for the *Embowelling*, than the

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the *Anatomizing* of them. As for the *Grecians*, this Art could not well be in practice among them, becauſe their uſual Cuſtom was to Burn their dead Bodies, as we find it atteſted by *Homer*, *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Plutarch*; and beſides, had *Anatomy* been in uſe among the *Grecians*, there is no diſpute but the works of *Hipocrates* yet extant, Would have diſcovered it, which we do not find in any place they do: Nay, ſo far from that, that *Hippocrates* himſelf going one time to viſit *Democritus*, he happen'd to find him buſie in Diſſecting ſeveral Beaſts, who asking him what he meant by his being ſo employ'd, *Democritus* (by way of Apology) makes him this reply, *Hæc Animalia quæ vides propterea ſeco, non Dei opera peroſus, ſed fellis biliſque naturam diſquirens.* Now, if he apprehended that the Diſſecting of *Beaſts* might be lookt upon as an *hating of Gods works*, he might much more have feared that cenſure, had he cut up the Bodies

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of *Men.* Nor does it appear by any thing extant in the Writings of *Galen*, that that other *Father of Phyſicians* ever made any *Anatomy* of Humane Bodies. Nor was this Art practiſed among the *Romans*, nor indeed could it be, foraſmuch as they held it unlawful, *Aſpicere humana exta*, (as *Pliny* in his Preface to his 28 Book tells us) to look upon the Entrals of Mens Bodies: And *Dion* in his *55th* Book ſays, That it was allowed to *Tiberius* to touch the Body of *Auguſtus*, *Quod nefas aliàs erat*, which otherwiſe had been unlawful. And that the *Primitive Chriſtians* favour'd not the Practice of *Anatomy*, will plainly appear from *Tertullian*, who in the *4th* Chapter of his Book *de Anima*, ſpeaking of one *Herophilus*, doubts whether to call him *Medicum* or *Lanium*, a *Phyſician* or a *Butcher*, *Qui Hominem odiit, ut noſſet*, ſaith he, Who hated Man, that he might know him: And St. *Auguſtine* in his *22th* Book *de Civ. Dei. Cap.* 24. runs much upon

on the ſame ſtrain. And among others we find Pope *Boniface* the 8*th* ſuch a profeſs'd Enemy to this art of diſſecting Humane Bodies, that he threatens immediately his *Thunderbolt* of *Excommunication* to all ſuch as ſhould do any thing of this nature. Thus we ſee how very ſhie and unacquainted the *Ancients* were with this moſt excellent Art, which certainly is one of the moſt uſeful in humane Life, as tending moſt to the Eviſcerating, and diſcloſing the ſecrets of Nature. But now in theſe latter Ages, we have taken off this thick Veil of Superſtition, and there is ſcarce any Man, who has not a deſire to know, *How curiouſly and wonderfully he is made.* Hence then *Anatomy* hath of late been a *free* and *general Practice*; and particularly in this Age it hath receiv'd wonderful Improvements. For proof whereof I need not take much pains, ſince there is no Man that hath the leaſt inſight into Phyſick, but knows how much the Learned Dr. *Harvey*

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in that excellent Treatiſe of his, *De Generatione Animalium*, hath tranſcended all that went before him, in that full and ſatisfactory account he there preſents the World with, concerning the Conſtitution, Structure, and Nutrition of Humane Bodies: What a mighty name hath he juſtly got in the *Orbis Literarius*, by that wonderful and ſurprizing diſcovery of the *Circulation of the Blood*; a Doctrine ſo Univerſally embraced, and ſo unqueſtionably true, that a Phyſician would be thought a Heretick *primæ Claſſis*, who ſhould in the leaſt diſpute it? How much is the whole College of Phyſicians indebted to the memory of the Famous Dr. *Gliſſon*, for giving them a more true and perfect account of the Nature of Sanguification, Bilification, Separation of Urine, and other Humours from the Maſs of Blood, than ever the World was formerly acquainted with? And does not the Incomparable Dr. *Willis* deſerve to be reckon'd among

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the Benefactors of Mankind, for thoſe great Diſcoveries he hath made of Nutrition, Generation, and Separation of the *Succus Nervoſus*, and Animal Spirits, with their præternatural affections? How glimmering a light, and how imperfect a notion had the Ancients of the nature of the *Saliva*, and other Juices that are convey'd into the Mouth, together with their Paſſages; until our Learned and Famous Country-Man, Dr. *Wharton*, and of late the Learned *Steno* ſo happily diſclos'd thoſe Secrets of Nature? Did any of the Ancients ever imagine, that the Lungs conſiſted only of Veſſels and Bladders? That the Liver, Spleen, and Reins were *Conglomerate Glandules*; and yet that theſe are ſo, that expert Anatomiſt, and great Naturaliſt, *Malpighius*, hath informed the World? Which of the Ancients ever dreamt, That the Teſticles of the Male ſhould be nothing but a *Conglomeration of Veſſels*; and the Female Teſticles, *Ovaries*; was not this

this Diſcovery alſo an honour reſerv'd for the preſent Age, and to the Induſtrious and Learned *De Graet* are the thanks due? Who among the Ancients ever rightly inform'd us as to the Operation of *Cathartick* Medicines in Humane Bodies; or as to the Reaſon of the different Colours of the *Excrements*, that are obſerv'd to be evacuated by them, until that great *Anatomical* light, *Sir George Ent*, imparted it to the World? Which was it of the Ancients, that ever had a true notion how the Chyle was convey'd into the Maſs of Blood? We very well know, they told us it diſcharg'd it ſelf through the *Meſeraick* Veins into the Liver; but as to its true Paſſage into the Blood, they were as little able to give an account of that, as they were to demonſtrate the Commixture of the Air therewith; and yet they had the confidence to teach it in their Schools as an *Ens Rationis*, though they had never made any Proof, or Experi-

ment for the truth of this Aſſertion. In what a high Meaſure then did that great Anatomiſt Dr. *Lower*, oblige the World, by his great Induſtry and indefatigable pains, who in that rare and admirable Tract of his, *De Corde*, hath not only more punctually ſhew'd the true paſſage of the *Chyle* through its Lacteals, Receptacle, and Chyliferous ducts, than formerly; but hath plainly demonſtrated that it is impoſſible there can be any other, by which it ſhould have its diſcharge into the Maſs of Blood? Nor are his Arguments leſs nervous and cogent, for proving the Commixture of the nitrous Particles of the Air with the Maſs of Blood. Thus have I given you an account of ſeveral of the moſt conſiderable Improvements made in this preſent Age, in that part of Phyſick relating to Anatomy; All which ingenious and excellent Inventions, are of great uſe, as affording us better Hypotheſes in Phyſick, and by Conſequence tending to a better and more

more effectual way of Curing Diſeaſes.

The next thing that falls under our Conſideration, is to ſhew how much *Geography* hath lately been Improv'd. The Ancients were ſo very defective in this Art or Science, that the Learned *Varenius* tells us, That the moſt General and Neceſſary Things belonging thereunto, were then unknown; as the Flux and Reflux of the Sea; the Habitableneſs of the Torrid Zone; the Polar property of the Magnet; the Diverſity of Winds; the true Dimenſion of the Earth; Nor had they any true Deſcriptions of remote Countries, concerning which both the *Greeks* and *Romans* had very fabulous Relations; they knew not that the Earth was encompaſſed by the Sea, and might be ſailed round; They were totally ignorant of *America*, and both the North and South parts of this Hemiſphere; yea, and underſtood very little of the remoter parts of their own *Aſia*;

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That part of the *Indies* that lies on the other ſide of the River *Ganges*, was in a manner a *Terra Incognita* to them; they knew little or nothing of the vaſt Kingdom of *China*, nothing of *Japan*, or the numerous Oriental Iſlands, and theſe made a great, if not the beſt part of *Aſia*. But that which to me ſeem'd ſtranger, or more remarkable, is, That neither *Thucydides* nor *Herodotus*, nor any other Greek Author Cotemporary with them, have ſo much as mention'd the *Romans*, though then growing up to a dreadful power, and being both *Europeans*. *Budæus* in his *4th* Book *De Aſſe*, tells us, That the *Grecians* were ſo utterly ignorant of the *Spaniards*, that *Ephorus*, one of their moſt accurate Geographers, took *Spain*, which he calls *Iberia*, to be a City. It was in former times counted ſo dangerous a thing to believe the *Antipodes*, that *Boniface*, Archbiſhop of *Mentz*, by chance ſeeing a Treatiſe written by *Virgilius*, Biſhop of *Saltzburg*, touch-

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ing the *Antipodes*, thinking that ſome Damnable pernicious Doctrine might be couched under that ſtrange Name, complain'd firſt to the Duke of *Bohemia*, and afterwards to Pope *Zachary*, *Anno* 745. By whom the poor Biſhop (whoſe great misfortune was to be Learned in ſuch a blockiſh Age) was condemn'd as a Heretick. Nay, even St. *Auſtin*, *Lactantius*, and ſome other of the Ancient Writers, do by no means allow of the *Antipodes*, but look upon it to be a ridiculous, incredible ſtory; And Venerable *Bede* is much of the ſame Opinion. The Learned *Fracaſtarius* ſaith, That our Anceſtors knew little Weſtward beyond the *Fortunate Iſlands*, and Eaſtward as little beyond *Catygara*, now call'd *Canton*, the Richeſt City in *China*; So that (as that Learned Author informs us) of the whole Habitable World, ſcarce one half was known to the Ancients. Now, by the account I have here given, it plainly appears, how groſly ignorant the Ancients were

in the knowledge of *Geography*, as alſo what a vaſt Improvement it hath received in theſe latter Days: For our Navigation is far greater, our Commerce is more general, our Charts more exact, our Globes more accurate, our Travels more remote, our Reports more intelligent and ſincere; and conſequently, our *Geography* far more perfect, than it was in the Elder Times of *Polybius* and *Poſſidonius*; yea, than in thoſe of *Ptolomy*, *Strabo*, and *Pomponius Mela*, who lived among the *Cæſars*. And if this Art was ſo very defective in the Flouriſhing times of the *Roman* Empire, there is no diſpute but it was much more ſo, in the days of *Ariſtotle* and the *Græcians*: And therefore no wonder the *Macedonian Youth* was no better inſtructed, than to believe he had Conquer'd the whole World; when (God knows) there were Nations enough, both before him and behind him, to have ſwallow'd up the *Young Commander*, and his *Triumphant Armies*, at a Morſel.

I am now come to the laſt *Parallel*, and that is, to ſhew what vaſt Improvements the Art of Navigation hath received in theſe laſt Ages. *Cardan*, a great ſearcher into the Curioſities of Nature, tells us, That among other late Noble Inventions, that of the *Mariners Compaſs* is the moſt worthy of Admiration, as being of the greateſt uſe and Convenience to Mankind. By the help hereof, we are now able to find out a way through the *vaſt Ocean*, in the greateſt Storms and darkeſt Nights, where is neither Path to follow, nor Inhabitant or Paſſenger to enquire; It points out the way to the skillful Mariner, when all other helps fail him, and that with greater certainty than the wit of Man can poſſibly do. By means hereof, are the Commodities of all Countries diſcover'd, Trade, Traffick, and Humane Society maintain'd, their ſeveral Forms of Government and Religion obſerv'd, and the whole World made as it were

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one *Common-Wealth*, and the moſt diſtant Nations, *Fellow Citizens* of the ſame *Body Politick*. But the beſt way to make us rightly value the bleſſing of this Invention, is, by conſidering the many ſhifts and Inconveniencies the Ancients were put to, for want of it. We may eaſily imagine, how inconvenient the Ancients found it to ſail by the guidance of the Stars: For in dark Cloudy weather, when their *Pleiades*, *Helice* and *Cynoſura* were not to be ſeen, the Pilot was always at a loſs for his Guide, and knew not how to ſteer his Ship, but lay expos'd to the caſual conduct both of Winds and Tides. And for this reaſon, the Ancients ſeldom or never durſt venture into the main Ocean, but were fain to go creeping along by the Shoar ſide: And no more than this (as we have reaſon to believe) did the *Phœnicians* and *Carthaginians*, the *Tyrians* and *Sydonians*; who though renowned in Hiſtory for great *Navigators*, yet by the moſt Learned

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are thought to have perform'd their Voyages only by *Coasting*, and not by *Crossing* the Ocean. Hence therefore it was, That the Commerce and Communications of those Days were very inconsiderable; Their famed Travels in Comparison were nothing; And that renowned ten Years Voyage of *Ulysses* (so highly celebrated by the Poets of Old) was much short of what many of our Merchants do now every Year perform. Thus you see how very defective the Ancients were in this Art of Navigation, the Benefits and Advantages whereof are so very Considerable, That the Wealth and Strength of a Nation are really to be computed in Proportion to their flourishing herein. It was long since a wise and true Observation of *Cicero*, *Qui Mare tenit, eum necesse est* RERUM *potiri*, He that commands the Sea, must necessarily enjoy all things. There is not any thing can be a greater Demonstration of the Flourishing of a Nation, than when its

its Genius lies towards *Naval* Affairs, and when by its Induſtry it is arriv'd to a Soveraignty of the *Seas*; This is the true Characteriſtical mark of the greatneſs of Empire: For whoever is Maſter of the Ocean, does *ipſo facto* command the Trade of the World, and whoever hath the Command of that, hath the Abſolute diſpoſal of the Riches of the World, and that Money is that which governs Mankind, is a Demonſtration as clear as any in *Euclide*. Thus without the leaſt ſtraining of the Argument, we ſee it naturally follows, That nothing is more vain or ridiculous, than for a Prince, or State, to pretend to an uncontrolable Greatneſs, that hath not firſt laid their Foundation in the Deep. And who can be a better inſtance of this than that Great Emperour *Charles* the *Fifth*, whoſe careleſsneſs in his *Naval* concerns not only broke his own Deſign as to the *Univerſal Monarchy*, but likewiſe terminated in the ruine of his *Succeſſor*?

And

And this overſight or neglect (though too late) that Great Prince was ſenſible of, when he ſo ſtrictly gave it in Charge to his Son *Philip*, That if either he would be happy at Home, or conſiderable Abroad, he ſhould take care to make himſelf Great at Sea. By his Example then, let no Prince, who aſpires to be great, ſlight or neglect this *Watry Element*; ſince 'tis but a jeſt in Politicks, and an *Utopian* Fancy, to think to arrive at the utmoſt height of Empire, without *Fleets* and *Armada's*: And that Prince who thinks to give Law to Mankind, muſt be ſure in the firſt place to make the *Sea* his Friend. This (without a Figure) is to build upon a Rock, whoſe Foundation will ſtand firm and ſure. And therefore that Spirit of Lazineſs, which makes the *Spaniard* ſo much ſlight this Rule, is that, which (in ſpight of the Wealth of the Weſt *Indies*) keeps him ſo poor and beggarly: And while he ſits idle at home, ſwelling with his own Pride, the *Engliſh* and *Dutch* (by their

their Induſtry) grow Rich by his Spoils, and with his Treaſure of the *Weſt Indies* do they carry on the Trade of the *Eaſt*. Thus you ſee, the improving of Trade and Commerce, is no ſuch ſlight matter; Nor is it to be wonder'd, that this does ſo often prove the Ball of Contention; for men may well be allowed to be zealous, when their intereſt is ſo nearly concern'd; and this, that Wiſe and Glorious Princeſs, *Queen Elizabeth*, very well knew, when ſhe ſo narrowly ey'd and obſerv'd the *Dutch*, whom ſhe was always jealous of, leſt they ſhould grow too great in Nivigation, and ſo by that means might prove our Competitors both by Sea and Land. Since then Commerce and Navigation bring ſuch mighty advantages to a Nation, 'tis no wonder, I ſay, that the greateſt and wiſeſt States, and Governments, have been ſo very ſollicitous for the improving it. *Trade* is the very Life and Soul of the *Univerſe*, which, like the *Vital* Blood in the Body, Circulates to the

Health

Health, and well-being of the whole; and when by the failure of Induſtry, there is a ſtep put to *Commerce*, it often proves as fatal to the *Body Politick*, as the ſtagnating of the Blood does to the *Natural Body*. What were the World but a rude and dull *Indigeſted Lump*, a noiſome and peſtilential Maſs, did not *Commerce*, like the *Sun*, by its *Univerſal* Rays, exhale all its malignant and noxious Vapours, and by a continual Motion and Tranſaction, render it wholeſome, and profitable? What would become of the *Buſie Soul* of Man, had ſhe not found out variety of Imployment for its Exerciſe? And therefore *Nature* wiſely did foreſee the many and great Inconveniencies of *Idleneſs*, how that it would Convert the World into another *Chaos*, making the *Earth* but as one dull and uſeleſs *Maſs*, when ſhe hid her Rarities and Treaſures in the ſecret Bowels thereof, and buried them in the *Watry Deep*, and lodg'd them at ſo vaſt and remote a diſtance, that ſo their *Worth* and *Value* might be

be a *Spur* to *Labour* and *Induſtry* to fetch them thence. Nay, God himſelf is particularly call'd *the God of the Iſles*, as looking on them, by Virtue of their skill in *Navigation*, to be the beſt *Factors* for the *Common Good*; and as a Bleſſing upon their Induſtry, we find moſt *Iſles* and Maritime places exceed all In-land Cities and Countries in Riches, and Variety of Plenty. We ſee then, 'tis not the vaſtneſs of Territory, but the Convenience of Situation; nor the Multitude of Men, but their Addreſs and Induſtry, which improve a Nation. Now, ſince we have hitherto diſcours'd of Trade in general, and the ſeveral Advantages that accrue from thence; poſſibly the Reader may not think it altogether impertinent, if we entertain him with an Account of the Original of *Trade*, and ſhew how, and by what ſteps and Methods *Commerce* hath advanc'd it ſelf amongſt Mankind. The firſt of all Humane Race, when they were diſpers'd into ſeveral Lands, were at firſt ſuſtain'd by the

Fruits

Fruits of the *Earth*, which fell to their ſhare. Theſe at firſt they cheriſh'd, and us'd, not by any *Rules* of *Art*, but by that *Natural Sagacity*, which teaches all Men to endeavour their own Preſervation. And that they might peaceably enjoy theſe, they thought the beſt Courſe they could take, was to Aſſociate themſelves into Families, and to enter into little Leagues, and thus begun *Civil Government*. But finding that no Place was ſo fruitful as to produce all Things neceſſary for Humane Life; this put them upon a Neceſſity, either of taking by force what their Neighbours poſſeſs'd, or elſe of Exchanging the ſeveral Productions of their reſpective Soils. This then was the way and Method of *Trading*, in the firſt Ages of Mankind; when one had eaten or ſpent what was his own, he repair'd to his Neighbour for more, at the ſame time accommodating him with ſome other Thing whereof he ſtood in need, by way of Ex-

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change, the reſpective value of the Things being limited according to their eſtimation of their goodneſs and ſcarcity, in the firſt place; and then of their Beauty or Comelineſs. And becauſe Oxen and Sheep afforded them the moſt Commodities, as their skins for Clothing, and their Milk and Fleſh for Food, beſides other uſes to which they were ſerviceable, they made all their Traffick with *Cattle*, in which their whole wealth conſiſted. But becauſe 'twas too troubleſome a thing for a Man to drive always a Flock of Sheep before him, or lead a Cow by the Horn, for making of payment; the Induſtry of Men encreaſing, they caſt their Eyes upon that which was in the next degree of moſt uſe to them, and moſt durable; and finding that nothing was of more general uſe than *Iron* and *Copper*, and eſpecially that the latter was the faireſt, and eaſieſt to be melted, and caſt into Kettles and other Domeſtick Utenſils, they made choice

choice thereof, mutually giving and receiving it, by weight, for other things they needed, and divided it by *Pounds*, which word ſtill remains amongſt us, to ſignifie Twenty Shillings, which is very near the juſt value that a Pound of *Copper* had in thoſe days. And to ſave the Labour of weighing this *Pound*, and the parts of it, they ſtamp'd upon one ſide the Figure of a *Ship*, with the weight and value; and on the other ſide the Picture of one of thoſe *Beaſts*, which are deſign'd by the word *Pecus*, whence *Money* came to be call'd *Pecunia*. Afterwards the *Arms* of the *Prince* were ſubſtituted inſtead of the *Ship*, and *Conſtantine* put a *Croſs* in the place of the *Beaſt*. Now becauſe, in the old *Gauliſh* Language, a *Ship* was call'd *Pile* (whence the Word *Pilote* remains to this day) the ſide of the *Coin* on which the *Ship* was is ſtill call'd *Pile*, and the other *Croſs*, how different ſtamps ſoever have ſucceeded ſince. This was the *firſt Original*

of *Trade*, which from a narrow Commerce between the Hills, the Vallies, the Woods, the Plains, and the Rivers, that border'd one upon another, is ſince extended to the whole Compaſs of the Earth. And now, 'tis high time to diſmiſs this Subject of *Navigation* and *Trade*; and therefore having already demonſtrated, how much the Preſent Age hath tranſcended Former Ages in thoſe three parts of Learning, *viz.* *Anatomy*, *Geography*, and *Navigation*, I now proceed.

If from the firſt Ages of the World we turn our Eyes to latter Times, I mean, to the Times of *Popiſh* Darkneſs, we ſhall Comparatively find that great is the light we now enjoy. Ignorance (we know) is the Mother of their Devotion and the very Eſſence of *Popery*, therefore no wonder that before the Reformation Learning was at ſo low an Ebb. King *Alfred* in his Preface upon the *Paſtorals* of St. *Gregory* (which he tranſlated into *Engliſh*) ſays, That when

when he came firſt to his Kingdom, He knew not one *Prieſt* on the South-ſide of the River *Humber*, that underſtood his Service in *Latine*, or that could tranſlate an Epiſtle into Engliſh. *Vignier* in his *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory* affirms, That *Gerbertus* the firſt Archbiſhop of *Rhemes* and *Ravenna*, afterwards *Pope*, under the name of *Silveſter* the *Second*, was reputed a *Magician*, becauſe he was well skill'd in the *Mathematicks*. (Thus, ſaith Dr. *Fuller*, do Ignorant People count all *Circles* above their own *Sphere* to be *Conjuring*, and preſently cry out, thoſe Things are done by the *Black Art*, for which their dim Eyes can ſee no Colour in reaſon. And in ſuch Caſes, when they cannot fly up to *Heaven* to make it a *Miracle*, they fetch it from *Hell* to make it *Magick*.) And how low Learning ran in *England* amongſt the Native Nobility, in the Reign of King *Henry* the *Sixth*, too plainly appears by the *Motto* on the Sword of the *Martial*, Earl of *Shrewsbury*,

which was, *Sum Talboti, pro Occidere in imicos meos*, the beſt Latin that Noble Lord, and perchance his Chaplains too (in that Age) could afford. *Eraſmus* tells us, That ſome Divines in his time undertook to prove, That *Hereticks* ought to be put to Death, from thoſe Words of the Apoſtle, *Hæreticum Hominem devita*, which it ſeems they underſtood, as if he had ſaid, *De vitâ tolle.* I have read of two *Fryars* diſputing whether God had made any more *Worlds* than One; the One wiſely alledging that paſſage of the Goſpel touching the ten *Lepers* which were cleans'd, *Annon Decem facti ſunt Mundi?* As if God had made Ten Worlds; the other (with great gravity) looking into the Text, replies as wiſely, with the words immediately following, *Sed ubi ſunt Novem?* But what is become of the Nine? So as from thence he would prove but one to be left. An old Prieſt in *Henry* the *Eighth*'s time, being reprov'd for reading in his

his Service Book *Mumpſimus Domine*, inſtead of *Sumpſimus*, reply'd, He had now us'd *Mumpſimus* theſe thirty Years, and for his part he would not leave his old *Mumpſimus* for their new *Sumpſimus*. At any time when their *Prieſts* were taken breaking *Priſcian*'s head, their Common Defence was, thoſe words of St. *Gregory*, *Non debent verba cœleſtis Oraculi ſubeſſe regulis Donati*, The words of the Heavenly Oracles ought not to be Subject to the Rules of *Donatus*. But theſe are Stories ſo well known, that I ought to Apologiſe for inſiſting ſo long upon them; and therefore to proceed to the laſt Queſtion, *viz.*

Whether Men do now live to as great an Age, as they did formerly? It muſt be granted, That in the firſt Ages of the World, both before and for ſome time after the *Flood*, Men did generally arrive to a much greater Age, than they have done ſince. But this is certainly to be attributed to ſome *extraordinary Cauſe*, and not

to the *Ordinary Courſe of Nature.* The World (we know) was then to be repleniſh'd with Inhabitants, which could not ſo ſpeedily be done, but by an extraordinary Multiplication of Mankind; Neither could that be done, but by the long lives of Men. And again, Arts and Sciences were then to be planted, for the better effecting whereof, it was requiſite, that the ſame Men ſhould have the Experience and Obſervation of many Ages. We know it was the Complaint of *Hippocrates*, *Ars longa, Vita brevis*; And therefore Almighty God in his Wiſdom did then proportion Mens *Lives* to the length of *Arts*: And as God gave them this ſpecial Priviledge to live long; ſo 'tis probable he gave them withal a Temper, and Conſtitution of Body, anſwerable thereunto. As alſo the *Food* wherewith they were nouriſh'd, eſpecially before the *Flood*, may well be thought to have been more *wholeſome* and *nutritive*, and the *Plants* more *Medicinal*:

dicinal: And happily the *Influence* of the *Heavens* was at that time, in that Climat where the *Patriarchs* liv'd, more benigne and favourable. Theſe (as far as we poor Mortals can Conjecture) might be the reaſons, why Divine Providence did aſſign to thoſe firſt Inhabitants ſo long a leaſe of their Lives. But in after-times, when the World was fully Peopl'd, and Arts and Sciences were Propagated, then it pleas'd the ſame Divine Providence to curtail, and abridge the Life of Man; inſomuch that in *Moſes*'s time the common Standard of Humane Life was *Seventy*, or at moſt *Eighty Years*. And ſo it was ever after counted. Hence alſo *Herodotus* ſets the longeſt Bounds of Man's Life to be but Eighty Years. *Barzillai* was ſaid to be a very Old Man, and yet he liv'd but to fourſcore: And *David* was full of Days, yet but Seventy Years Old. *Solomon*, as Divines Conjecture, was not Sixty, yet it is ſaid, *when Solomon was Old*. The Learned

Joannes

Joannes Jonſtonius tells us, That in all the Records of the *Roman*, *Greek*, *French*, and *German* Emperours, there were but four who liv'd to be fourſcore. And our *Engliſh* Chronicle informs us, That Queen *Elizabeth* out-liv'd all her Predeceſſors from *William* the Conquerour. *Petrus Crinitus* ſaith, that the *Egyptians* by a ſubtile Conjecture, taken from the Weight of the *Heart*, found out within what bounds the Life of Man was included; they affirming, That it was ſcarce poſſible for a Man to live above a Hundred Years: For, ſaid they, the *Heart* every Year till Fifty increaſed two *Drams*, and from thence to an hundred Years it decreas'd as much, and ſo returning to its Original Weight, it can then make no further Progreſs. Now, though this Obſervation does certainly carry in it more of *Curioſity* than *Truth*, yet doth it plainly ſhew, That the common Opinion of the *Ancients*, was, That Men did ſeldom live above a Hundred Years.

Years. And we find, the Learned *Varro* was alſo of the ſame Belief, and therefore he tells us, They call'd the ſpace of a Hundred Years, *Seculum*, from *Senex*, an Old Man, becauſe they thought that was the utmoſt Period of Mans life. Thus then we ſee, That Men live now as long as they did formerly; and that for theſe three Thouſand Years at leaſt there hath been no Alteration. It is the Obſervation of that great Philoſopher, the Lord *Verulam*, *Decurus Seculorum, & Succeſſio Propaginis, nihil videntur omninó demere de Diuturnitate vitæ*; the Courſe of Times, and Succeſſion of Ages, ſeem to have no whit abated from the length of Mens Lives. *No doubt*, ſays that Noble Lord, *There are times in all Countreys, wherein Men live either longer or ſhorter; longer, moſt commonly when the Times are Barbarous, and the Diet more plain, and more given to Bodily Exerciſe; Shorter, when they are more Civil, and there*

is

is more Luxury and Idleneſs; But in theſe Things there is a Viciſſitude and Revolution; The Succeſſion of Generations alters it not. If it did, the firſt Man in reaſon ſhould have lived longeſt, and the Son ſhould ſtill come ſhort of his Father's Age: So that whereas *Moſes* tells us, That the Days of Man in his time were threeſcore Years and Ten, by this reckoning they might well enough by this time be brought to ten or twenty, or thirty at the moſt. In a word, we will not ſay, but that Accidents, Accidental Occurrences, Intemperance, ill and noxious Effluvia from the Earth, Waters, and intemperature of the Air, and other Accidents may in theſe latter Ages of the World produce ſome ſuch Diſeaſes, and accidental Diſorders, as may poſſibly more infeſt Mankind, and occaſion more Mortality, than in former Ages: But as to the regular and ordinary Courſe of Natural Procedure and State of Things

Things with Mankind, yea and other Animals, there ſeems to be little or no decay, or Variation from what hath been formerly.

ESSAY VI.

Of Paſſion: And whether the Paſſions are an Advantage, or Diſadvantage to Men.

'Twas the uſual ſaying of a very Ingenious Perſon, *That Paſſionate Men, like Yorkſhire Hounds, are apt to over-run the Scent.* They have not the Patience to pauſe and deliberate, but *Quicquid in Buccam venerit*, whatſoever they think they ſpeak; and therefore it is, they often run into ſuch groſs Abſurdities; for as *Ariſtotle* well obſerves, *Qui citò pronunciat, ad pauca reſpicit.* A mind tranſported with Paſſion, rejects the beſt Reaſons, and retains the worſt Opinions; like a *Bolter*, which lets the *Flour* paſs, and keeps nothing

thing but the *Bran*. Therefore *Plato* ſpeaking of Paſſionate Perſons, ſays, They are like Men who ſtand upon their Heads, They ſee all things the wrong way. How inconſiſtent Paſſion and Reaſon is, *Seneca* ſeems to intimate, by that Expreſſion of his, *Nemo conſilium cum Clamore dat*: And how incompatable the Spirit of God and Paſſion is, the Holy Scriptures themſelves do plainly ſhew; For when *Elias* was upon the Mountain, there came a Whirlwind, and God was not there; then an Earthquake, and God was not there; But at laſt came a ſtill Voice, and God was there. The Scripture likewiſe exhorteth us, *To poſſeſs our Souls in Patience*; intimating, according to the Lord *Bacon's* Paraphraſe, *That whoſoever is out of Patience, is out of the Poſſeſſion of his Soul*: Well therefore might the Poets call *Anger* a *ſhort Madneſs*: For look upon an Angry Man, when he is in the height of his Rage, and you may ſee all *Africa*, and its Prodigies

in

in him; He is more ſavage than the Tygers there; Blow him into a Flame, and you may ſee *Vulcano's Hurricans*, and *Boraſco's* in him. And certainly were he (while his Paſſion was thus raging) forc'd to look himſelf in the Glaſs, thoſe very Convulſions and Diſtortions his Anger had put him into, would ſoon ſhame him into a better temper. In ſhort, there is no ſurer Argument of a Great Mind, than not to be tranſported to Anger by any Accident whatſoever; The Clouds and Tempeſts are form'd below, but all above is quiet and ſerene; which is the true Emblem of a Brave Man, that ſurpaſſes all Provocations, and lives within himſelf. This made a Great Philoſopher ſay, That a Wiſe Man ought to be like the *Caſpian Sea*, which is ſaid never to *Ebb* or *Flow*. But from this exceſs of the Paſſions to infer an utter uſeleſſneſs of them, to me ſeems very unreaſonable: For I cannot think Nature is ſuch a ſevere Step-Dam, as that by her Planting

Planting theſe Paſſions in us, ſhe deſign'd only to Plague and Torment us: I therefore conclude, There is an honeſt and an innocent uſe of them. As *Bias* once ſaid of the Tongue, that it was the beſt and worſt part of Man, ſo may we of the Affections; *Nec meliores unquam ſervos, nec Dominos ſentit Natura Deteriores*, They are the beſt Servants, but the worſt Maſters that Nature can have; like the Winds, which being moderate, carry the Ship; but drown it, being tempeſtuous. And as it is obſerved in greater States, ſo does the ſame hold true in Man's little Common-wealth, That thoſe who are the fitteſt for Service, if once they become Mutinous, always prove the moſt dangerous ſort of Enemies: And thus the old Rule, *Corruptio Optimi Peſſima*, holds true. I know there have been ſeveral Modern *Stoicks*, who with a *zeal* much tranſcending their *Knowledge*, have declaim'd againſt the Paſſions; Nothing leſs than an utter Extirpation

tion will ſatisfie theſe Men: They are not contented with our keeping them under, and retaining them upon the ſame terms, as *Abraham did thoſe Domeſticks he bought with his Money*, whom the Scripture ſaith, *He both Circumcis'd, and kept as Servants*; But they tell us, that the Mind ought to deal with its Affections, juſt as *Pharaoh* would have dealt with the *Jews-Males*, whom he thought it beſt to cut off, for fear they might (ſome time or other) be in a condition to make head againſt him. But whether this be reaſonable or no, let any Man judge; Becauſe the Paſſions are now and then diſorderly, muſt we therefore wiſh there were no Paſſions? No certainly; for this would be every whit as unreaſonable, as to wiſh there were no *Rivers* in the World, becauſe it ſometimes happens, that by their overflowing we receive great Detriment. When I conſider, That our Bleſſed Saviour, who took upon him all our *Natural* Infirmities, but

none of our *Sinful*, has been ſeen to *Weep*, to be *Sorrowful*, to *Pity*, and to be *Angry*; I cannot but then conclude, *That a Man may be Angry and Sin not.* It is not the bare Agitation, but the Sediment at the bottom that troubles and defiles the Water. The Paſſions are ſo far from being always hurtful, that we read of ſeveral that have receiv'd great advantages from them. For Wit proceeds from Active Spirits, or a good Degree of Heat in the Brain; And therefore they, who have been deny'd by Nature this Faculty, and will not take the Pains by Study and Exerciſe to improve their Parts, do oftentimes encreaſe their Heat by ſome high Paſſion, and ſo appear more Witty and Ingenious than at other times, when their Spirits (being as it were benumm'd with Cold) are not able to exert themſelves; And from hence came that known ſaying, *Vexatio dat Intellectum.* *Seneca*, hearing a dull Orator make a moſt Eloquent Harangue

rangue the very day his Son dy'd, cry'd out, *Magna pars Eloquentiæ eſt Dolor*; ſo *Polus* the Actor, to enable him to make a more lively Repreſentation of the Grief of a Father upon the body of his Deceaſed Son, brought in an *Urne* the Aſhes of his own Son newly Dead. So much for the Paſſion of Grief. Then for Anger, *Si Natura negat, Facit Indignatio verſum. Archilochus* and *Hipponax* were two very indifferent Poets, yet in meer Spleen and Malice, to be revenged of two Perſons that had injur'd them, invented thoſe Doggrel ſorts of Verſes, *Iambicks* and *Scazons*, which they did to ſuch a Perfection, that their Adverſaries deſpairing of ever being able to anſwer them, made away themſelves. And as for the Paſſion of Love, let the Smith of *Antwerp* paſs for an Inſtance; who being rejected by his Sweet-Heart becauſe of his dirty Profeſſion, chang'd his Hammers and Anvil, for Pencils and Tables, and ſo from an Inconſiderable Black-

Smith, he became the moſt noted Painter of his time. Thus we ſee, the Paſſions, if rightly manag'd, are of great Uſe and Service to us; But if once we ſuffer them to grow headſtrong, Lions, Wolves, and Tygers are more governable. We too well know, there is not any one thing hath done more hurt to the Chriſtian Religion, than the Spirit of Paſſion; as is moſt evident by thoſe many late unhappy Diſputes and Controverſies amongſt us. 'Tis ſtrange, that Men cannot talk of Religion, but at the ſame time they muſt Quarrel too; as if the beſt way of eſtabliſhing the Law of *God*, was by violating the Laws of *Charity*. I thank God, my Charity is of an Extenſive Nature; I refrain no man's Company, becauſe his Opinion comes not up to mine; Nor do I think it reaſonable, that a difference in Opinion ſhould divide an Affection. Mens Underſtandings are not all of one Size and Temper; and therefore it cannot be imagin'd,

there

there ever will be ſuch a Conſonancy, and Uniformity of Judgment amongſt all Men, no, not amongſt Wiſe and Good Men, but that in many things, yea and thoſe ſometimes of great Importance, they may and will diſſent one from another unto the Worlds end. But it is one thing to *Diſſent from*, and another, to be at *Diſcord with*, a Man: *Ita diſſenſi ab illo* (ſays *Tully* concerning himſelf and *Cato*) *ut indisjunctione ſententiæ, conjuncti tamen amicitiâ maneremus.* *'Tis an excellent Rule*, ſaith Biſhop *Wilkins*, *to be obſerv'd in all Diſputes, That Men ſhould give ſoft words, and hard Arguments: That they ſhould not ſo much ſtrive to vex, as to convince an Enemy.* If this were but diligently practis'd in all Caſes, and on all ſides, we might in a good Meaſure be freed from thoſe vexations in the ſearch of Truth, which the Wiſe *Solomon*, by his own Experience, did ſo much complain of, when he told us, That *in much Wiſdom there is*

much Grief, and he that encreaſeth Knowledge, encreaſeth Sorrow. There is nothing ſo impertinent in Diſputes and Controverſies, as Anger and Paſſion: For every Man is fond of his own Notion, and no Man cares to be Huff'd and Hector'd out of it; And therefore this Bluſtering way is ſo far from inclining us to yield to Mens Opinions, that it rather hardens us againſt them, by giving us a prejudice to their Perſons. They are the gentle Inſinuations which pierce, as Oil is the moſt penetrating of all Liquors; And the beſt way of *Proſelyting* Men, is to gain their Affections. If Diſputes could be manag'd with Temper and moderation, Men might certainly reap great benefit by them: But our unruly Paſſions do ſo much get the Aſcendant over our Underſtandings, that this is a thing rather to be wiſh'd, than to be expected. Upon this Conſideration was it, That the great *Montaign* was for ſuppreſſing and hindering all Diſputes and Controverſies:

Controverſies: And much of the ſame Mind was the Philoſopher *Plato*, who in his *Republick* prohibits this Exerciſe to Fools and ill-bred People. I think, there is not any Man ſo ignorant, but knows, That nothing hath been a greater ſcandal to the Reformed Religion, either among *Heathens*, *Mahometans*, or *Papiſts*; nay, nor hath given a fairer occaſion for bringing in of Atheiſm and Infidelity, than our Diviſions and Animoſities, which proceed from our many Controverſies and Diſputes of Religion. Indeed, our Controverſies about Religion, ſaith the Learned *Stillingfleet*, have brought at laſt even Religion it ſelf into a Controverſie: For weaker heads, ſaith he, when they once perceive the Battlements ſhake, are apt to ſuſpect the Foundation it ſelf ſtands not firm; And if they ſee any thing call'd in Queſtion, they preſently conclude, there is nothing certain. *Luther*, obſerving how prejudicial School-Divinity had been to the

Chriſtian Religion, crys out, *Quam primùm apparuit Thæologica Scholaſtica, evanuit Theologia Crucis.* I wiſh the Diſputes of this Age, have not done as much miſchief. When Men will be wiſer than God, and in their fooliſh Wiſdom think it fit to add their ſtrength to God's weakneſs, as a ſpeedier and ſurer way to eſtabliſh the Truth; then does God, to convince them of their folly, ſuffer that ſtrong Man, the Enemy of the Goſpel, (whom none but his Almighty Arm can bind and Maſter) to come, and Sow his Tares of Diviſion, which ſoon over-runs the good Seed of the Church, and ſo brings all to Confuſion. Thus then, by our fooliſh Notions and Conceptions do we often ſtain and dilute the very Fountain it ſelf. And as the *Jews* dealt with the Bleſſed *Jeſus*, ſo do we now with his Holy Religion, by platting its head with a Crown of Thorns. And this is that, that hath robb'd the Chriſtian World of its Unity and Peace, and

made

made the Church the Stage of Everlasting Contentions. For nothing puts Men more out of humour one with another, than Schisms and unnecessary Breaches of Church Communion: This naturally sours the Tempers of Men, and alienates their Affections to the highest Degree; for both Parties endeavouring to vindicate themselves, are forc'd to recriminate, and these Recriminations always end in Heat and Passion; And so, like two *Flints* struck together, they will be continually sparkling and spitting fire at one another, till they have kindled the Quarrel into an inquenchable Flame. Thus we see, how much even Religion suffers by these unhappy Disputes and Quarrels among us: For there is nothing does more abate the inward strength of Religion, than when it is rarified into Airy Notions and Speculations; This (indeed) gnaws and consumes the very Vitals, and in a short time will quite destroy the substance of it.

It was the *Motto* of the Primitive Christians, *Non magna loquimur, ſed vivimus*, our Religion conſiſts not in *Talking*, but in *Doing* Great Things. But may not the *Reverſe* of this be properly apply'd to the Preſent Age, *viz. Non vivimus, ſed Magna Loquimur.* Religion is now become one of the *Artes Sermocinales*, a Talkative Myſtery, an Art not to govern the *Mind*, and to regulate the *Actions*, but to Frame and Faſhion *Diſcourſe.* And now to conclude, 'tis no wonder, that our Diſputes and Controverſies have ſo ill an effect, when our unruly Paſſions have ſo great a ſhare in them. For, as we have ſaid before, the Paſſions if not moderated, are the Bruitiſh Part in us; and therefore, when we transform our ſelves into *Beaſts*, it is not to be ſuppos'd we can Act like *Men.*

ESSAY

ESSAY VII.

The variety of Opinions: *Whence it proceeds: The uncertainty of Humane Knowledge.*

ALL our ſeveral *Opinions* are nothing but the meer various Taſts of ſeveral Minds, framed partly by our ſeveral Natures, partly by our different Educations, and Inſtructions, and partly by the various Encounters, which we have met with in our ways of Life. Hence it is, that *Quot Homines, tot Sententiæ*, *Opinions* are as numerous as Mankind it ſelf; and that the ſeveral Conſtitutions of our Minds, differ no leſs than thoſe of our Bodies. There are as many Internal Forms of the Mind, as there are External Figures of Men: And the Soul of Man hath its Palat as well as the Body; *Opinion* being nothing but the Guſto or Reliſh of the Soul: Nay, ſome have been ſo Critical, as

to

to affirm, That there is ſo great a Correſpondence betwixt the one and the other, that thoſe who are of a different Diet, are generally obſerv'd to be of different Opinions; and the Learned Dr. *Harvey* gives this for the reaſon, Becauſe (ſays he) a different Diet ſends up different *Steams* to the Head, and according to theſe *Steams* are Mens *Opinions*. But this ſounding more like a *Notion* than a *Truth*, we ſhall lay no ſtreſs upon it, but proceed. There is (then) a certain Congruity of ſome Opinions to the particular Tempers of ſome Men; and therefore we ſee, how readily ſuch Doctrines, as ſuit themſelves to the particular Inclination of the Mind, or Underſtanding, are embraced, and received; whereas thoſe that are oppoſite to it, are commonly rejected with the greateſt contempt imaginable. Thus do we Love, and Hate without being able to give a Reaſon why. Some Faces both of Perſons, and Things, we admire and doat on; to others,

others, much better deſerving our eſteem, we can ſcarcely afford a common Civility. Indeed, the dull and unactive Spirits, that concern not themſelves in *Theory*, give not themſelves the trouble to examine Matters, but taking Things in the Groſs, follow the Common Belief, and are for keeping the beaten Road; But thoſe, whoſe Minds are of a Brisker, and more Vigorous Conſtitution, will fall into that of their particular *Craſis*. Hence then, I ſay, is it, we find Men taking in ſome particular *Opinions* with ſtrange Pleaſure and Satisfaction, upon their very firſt Propoſals; when at the ſame time they will not hearken to others, though they recommend themſelves with a much greater ſtrength of Reaſon. In a word, almoſt every one is ſatisfied, That there is a particular Genius, or ſpecial Inclination in Mens Minds, and that ſome *Opinions* do naturally make a much greater impreſſion than others; But the *vexata Quæſtio* is, how, or from

from whence this *Temperament* of the *Mind* proceeds. Some therefore tell us, That this great Diverſity of the Operations of the Mind, is to be aſcribed to the Souls Dependance upon the Body, and that a Good, or Bad Diſpoſition of the *Organical* Parts, does certainly render the Soul either Vigorous or Unactive in its ſeveral Operations. Whatſoever defect (then) we may perceive in ſome Men, we are not to think it proceeds from any Deficiency in the Soul, but from the Coexiſtence it has with a Body ill diſpos'd for Aſſiſtance and Information. For he who is carried in a Coach, (as the Body is *Vehiculum Animæ*) though he himſelf could go much faſter, muſt yet receive ſuch Motion as that affords; And Water, which is convey'd through Pipes and Aqueducts, though its Motion by it ſelf would have been otherwiſe, muſt yet then be confin'd and limited by the Poſture and Proportion of the Veſſels through which it paſſes. Hence

Hence we are told, That ſome Men are even by Nature, and Complexion, inclin'd to Vertue and Goodneſs; As it was ſaid of *Clitus*, (whom *Alexander* in a Drunken humour ſlew,) *That he had Vertues by Nature, and Vices by Accident*; And that others, even by the oddneſs of their particular Make and Contexture, are determin'd to Actions of Vice. It was a received Opinion among the Ancients, That outward Beauty was an infallible Argument of inward Beauty; and ſo on the contrary, That a deformed Body was a true Index of a deformed Mind, or an ill Nature. Hence was that of the Poet:

Clauda tibi mens eſt, ut pes: Natura notaſque
Exterior certas Interioris habet.

As alſo that of *Martial, Lib.* 12. *Epigram* 54.

Crine

Crine ruber, niger ore, brevis pede, lumine læſus:
Rem magnam præſtas, Zoile, ſi bonus es.

It was alſo the ſaying of *Victorinus*, *In diſtorta Membra virtus cadere non poteſt*: And *Pythagoras* was ſo bigotted to this Opinion, that he would never admit into his School any that had the leaſt Natural Blemiſh or Deformity. Upon this general Opinion was grounded that common ſaying, *Cave tibi ab iis, quos Natura Signavit*, which we may render thus, *Whom God hath Markt, let Man Mark.* And therefore *Homer*, ſpeaking of the ſevreal ill Qualities of *Therſites*, takes care to fit him with a Body ſuitable to ſuch a Mind. Now, the reaſon (poſſibly) why Nature for the moſt part orders it ſo, may be this; the Method ſhe takes (though imperceptible to us) is Regular and Mathematical, and therefore probably nothing may more

more break and diſorder that Symmetry ſhe obſerves, than by matching a good Soul with a deformed Body; for this ſeems to be *Impar Congreſſus*, putting things unequally together. But yet this Rule is not ſo general, as to admit of no Exception, as we may ſee in the Emperour *Galba*, a Prince of an unhappy outward Figure, of whom it was ſaid, *Ingenium Galbæ malé habitat*; The ſame may be alſo obſerv'd of *Ageſilaus*, and ſome others, though not many; and therefore *Seneca* tells us, *Ex caſâ vir Magnus exire poteſt, & ex deformi humilique Corpuſculo formoſus Animus & Magnus*. I grant indeed, ſeveral Examples there are of Great Perſons, whoſe outward Deformities have been very remarkable, and yet we find their Vertues and good Qualities highly celebrated; But yet (poſſibly) did we but make a narrow ſearch into their Lives, we ſhould find the difference and alteration was chiefly wrought by Education or Cuſtom, which of-

ten-times over-ſways Nature. Thus we ſee, what a great Correſpondency there is betwixt the Soul and the Body, which is ſuch, that they manifeſtly participate the Affections one of the other: And therefore if the Body be ſick, the Soul is alter'd in its Operations, as we ſee in high Fevers, and other acute Diſeaſes: And on the contrary let the Soul be ſad or joyful, the Body is ſo too. Therefore the Sophiſters of old were wont to Purge themſelves with *Hellebore*; when they would diſpute beſt. For though in its Eſſence the Soul depends not on the Corporeal Organs, yet it depends upon the ſame in its Operations, which are different according to the diverſe ſtructures of the Organs; which, if they were alike diſpos'd, their Actions would be alike in all, and at all times. Whence ſaith *Ariſtotle*, if an old Man had a young Mans Eyes, he would ſee as clear as a Young Man. That Ingenious Maſter of Poetry, Mr. *Dryden*, ſpeaking of the

the mutability of *Man*, ſays, That our Minds are perpetually wrought on by the temperament of our Bodies: which (ſaith he) makes me ſuſpect, they are nearer ally'd, than either our Philoſophers, or School-Divines will allow them to be. I have obſerv'd, ſays *Montaign*, That when the Body is out of Order, its Companion is ſeldom at eaſe: An ill Dream, or a Cloudy Day, has power to change this wretched Creature, who is ſo proud of a *Reaſonable Soul*, and make him think what he thought not yeſterday. The Learned Dr. *Henry More*, ſays, *That our Imagination alters, even as our Blood and Spirits are alter'd*; *And therefore*, ſays he, *as Dreams are the Fancies of thoſe that ſleep, ſo Fancies are but the Dreams of Men awake*; *And theſe Fancies by Day, as thoſe Dreams by Night, will vary and change with the Weather and preſent Temper of the Body*. But to proceed; Others are of Opinion, that this great Diverſity proceeds from ano-

ther Cauſe, to wit from the *Climat.* *Peter Heylin*, ſpeaking of the Diſperſion of the Families of the Sons of *Noah*, ſays, That though they all deſcended from one Common Root, yet by the Situations of their ſeveral Dwellings, they came to be of ſeveral Tempers and Affections; in which they were ſo different from one another, that they ſeem'd rather to have been made at firſt out of ſeveral Principles, than to have been deriv'd from one Common Parent. The Ground or Reaſon of which difference (ſays *Heylin*) is to be attributed to the different Tempers of thoſe Countries in which they liv'd, and to the different Influences of the Heavenly Bodies on thoſe ſeveral Countreys; which do continue ſtill the ſame, though many times the Countreys ſhift and change their Old Inhabitants. Thus, if we enquire into the old Characters, which either *Florus*, *Cæſar*, *Tacitus*, or *Juvenal* gave of the old *Brittains*, *Gauls*, *Germans*, *Normans*, &c. We

ſhall

ſhall find that the ſame Vertues, and Vices, do ſtill proſper under the ſame Climats, notwithſtanding in moſt of theſe Places the old Inhabitants, or their Breed, are quite wore away. 'Tis obſerv'd, That where the Heaven is always in the ſame Poſture, as toward the *Poles*; or where the Sun heats almoſt in the ſame Degree, as near the *Equator*, (which makes the Days and Nights equal,) the Manners and Inclinations of the People are alſo equal: And on the contrary, Thoſe that by the ſeveral Remotions and Approaches of the Sun have different Conſtitutions of *Air*, receive ſuitable impreſſions from the ſame, which are afterwards manifeſted in their Actions. As (therefore) Fruits and Beaſts differ according to the ſeveral Countreys, in which they are; ſo are Men born more or leſs Warlike, juſt, temperate, and the like, according to their ſeveral *Climats*. And therefore *Plato* thankt God, That he was an *Athenian*, and not a *Theban*. *Plutarch*

tells us, That thoſe of the higher part of the City of *Athens* were of a quite contrary humour to thoſe that dwelt about the Gate of *Pyreus*; and it is obſerv'd, that thoſe who dwell on the North-ſide of a Mountain, differ as much from thoſe that dwell on the South ſide, as they do both from thoſe in the Valley. Now, from this Diverſity of Mens Tempers, proceed the ſeveral Forms, and Conſtitutions of Government; and thence it is, that in the ſame Countreys we find little Variation as to Government, but that in all Ages they have ſtill kept to much one and the ſame Form; the ſame Genius or Temper ever continuing under the ſame *Climat*: And whenever any Country, either by perſwaſion, have Voluntarily, or by force have been compell'd to quit their old Form of Government; yet in proceſs of Time they naturally return into the old Channel. This then is the reaſon, why thoſe who inhabit the moſt Intemperate Climes, are always

always for preferring the Deſpotick, Arbitrary Rule; whereas thoſe who live under the more temperate, and leſs ſevere Climats, eſpecially in *Europe*, have affected and preferr'd more gentle and moderate Governments, running anciently much into Common-Wealths, and of latter Ages into Principalities circumſcrib'd by Laws, which differ not ſo much in Nature as in Name. The natural reaſon whereof, ſays that Accompliſh'd Author, *Sir William Temple*, I take to be this, *viz. That in the more Intemperate Climats, the Spirits either exhal'd by Heat, or compreſt by Cold, are rendr'd faint and ſluggiſh, and by that reaſon the Men grow tamer and fitter for Servitude? That in more temperate Regions, the Spirits are ſtronger and more active, whereby Men become bolder in the Defence or Recovery of their Liberties.* Now, by what we have already ſaid, it plainly appears, That the great Variety of Mens Actions and Opinions cannot proceed from the Diverſity

of their Souls, which are accounted all equal, but from that of their Bodies; wherein according to the various Tempers thereof, the Soul produces that variety of Manners. Let us not then any longer wonder, to find ſo great a Diverſity of Opinions in the World; ſince it is a thing wholly impoſſible for all Men to be of the ſame mind: For ſo long as Mens Organs are of ſeveral makes, and we live under divers Climats, we muſt neceſſarily have different Sentiments, and Apprehenſions of Things. Nor would there be any harm in this Diverſity of Opinions, could Men but diveſt themſelves of that Pride and Arrogance, which makes them ſo fond of Propagating their own Notions. But while every Man pretends to the *Spirit of Infallibility*, and muſt be a *Dictator* to the reſt of Mankind, then there is nothing but Confuſion and Diſorder to be expected. And this was that, which made ſuch Diſturbance, and Embroilments

amongſt

amongſt us in the late times: every Opinion was made an Article of Faith, and every Article became a Ground of a Quarrel, and every Quarrel made a Faction, and every Faction was zealous, and all zeal pretends for God, and whatſoever is for God cannot be too much; and indeed, we were come to that paſs, That we thought we lov'd not God, unleſs we hated our Brother, and that we had not the Vertue of Religion, unleſs we perſecuted all Religions but our own. But let us not deceive our ſelves, for, whatſoever ſome may think, this is not the violence that gains *Heaven*; Nor is there any thing that makes us more unlike God, who is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Conſolation, than a Furious, Hot, and Perſecuting Spirit. His Appearance was in the ſoft and ſtill Voice, not in Whirlwinds and Hurricanes; and where there is *Spiritus Procellæ*, we may ſatisfie our ſelves it proceeds from another Principle. The *Holy*

Ghoſt

Ghoſt was pleas'd to appear not in the Form of a *Vulture*, (a ravenous and devouring Creature) but in the ſhape of a *Dove*, the Emblem of *Meekneſs*. The true Church is ſtyl'd by the name of the *Lilly amongſt Thorns*: The *Lilly* does not *Scratch* and *Tear*, that's the Property of *Thorns* and *Briars*, the moſt inconſiderable ſort of ſhrubs. (And indeed, let us but reflect who were the chief Promoters of our late Perſecutions, and we ſhall find they were the ſlighteſt of the *Clergy*, and the moſt Profligate of the *Laity*: None being ſo fit to make Shipwrack of other Mens Conſciences, as thoſe who have none of their own.) The moſt natural and effectual way (then) of Promoting the Bleſſed Goſpel, is, by following its own Rules, and Precepts of Meekneſs and Moderation. Sweetneſs and Ingenuity will more command Mens Minds, than Paſſion, Sourneſs, and Severity: As the ſoft Pillow ſooner breaks the Flint, than the hardeſt Marble. Therefore,

when

when we would convince Men of any Error by the ſtrength of Truth, we ſhould do it with all the tenderneſs, and in the moſt obliging manner we are able. For Truth and Love are two the moſt Charming Things in the World; and when theſe go hand in hand together, there is no Humane Force can withſtand them. But that which proves very miſchievous to many, is their taking that to be *zeal* for God and Religion, which really is nothing but their own violent and furious Paſſion. True zeal then is a ſweet, Heavenly, and gentle Flame, which makes us active for God, but always within the Sphear of Love. It never calls for *Fire from Heaven*, to Conſume thoſe who agree not with us in all Points and Circumſtances. It is much of the Nature of that kind of *Lightning*, (that the Philoſophers tell us of) which melts the *Sword* within, but never ſindgeth the *Scabbard*: It ſtrives to ſave the Soul, but at the ſame time hurteth not the

the Body. In a word, we may learn what kind of *Zeal* it is we ſhould make uſe of in promoting the Goſpel, by an Emblem of Gods own, given us in the Scripture, thoſe *Fiery Tongues*, which upon the Day of *Pentecoſt* ſat upon the *Apoſtles*; and that theſe were Innocent Flames, no Man can doubt, for we do not find, that they did ſo much as ſindge an hair of their heads. This then is *true Zeal*, and whatſoever is more than this, proceeds from evil, and is no other than a *Fever* in the Soul. There is not any thing that drives Man more furiouſly, nor that hath more diſturb'd the Peace of Mankind, than *Miſtaken Zeal*. *Odia Religionum ſunt acerbiſſima*, is now grown into a *Proverb*; of all Hatreds, there are none more furious and unnatural, than thoſe which ariſe out of Contrarieties in Religion; and it is generally obſerv'd, That the leſs Material their Difference, the more implacable is the Hatred: As the *Turks* think

think it more acceptable to God, to kill one *Perſian*, than ſeventy Chriſtians. Nothing ſo vehemently alienates Mens Affections, as variety of Judgment in matters of Religion; Here they cannot diſagree, but preſently they muſt fall together by the Ears; and when once Religion divides Mens minds, no other common Intereſt can unite them; and where zeal diſſolves Friendſhip, the ties of Nature are not ſtrong enough to reconcile it: And therefore our Saviour tells us, That in this Caſe Men would forget all the Bonds of Natural Obligation; inſomuch that the Father would deliver up his own Child, and the Children their Parents unto Death: As we find, that the bloody Hatred of *Cain* againſt *Abel* aroſe from the different Acceptance of their Sacrifices. Nor indeed is it to be wonder'd, if that enmity grow exceſſive, which hath zeal to kindle it, and pretence of Religion to warrant it: For when that which ſhould reſtrain, and ſet limits

limits to a Paſſion, is made a Party to engage it, and fuel to foment it, no wonder if a Paſſion, which hath no Bounds from Religion, do impoſe none upon it ſelf. And this occaſion of mutual Hatred, we find obſerv'd even in the ridiculous Superſtitinos of *Ægypt*, when one Town would kill and eat the Fleſh of another, in zeal to the Calves, or Sheep, or other Creatures, which they did ſeverally worſhip. Now, having ſhew'd how much miſchief *Miſtaken Zeal* has done in the World, I need not ſpend much time in ſhewing the ill Succeſs that Perſecution hath conſtantly been attended with; the Hiſtory of all Ages has done this to my hand. *Sanguis Martyrum, ſemen Eccleſiæ*, is a Truth will laſt to the Worlds End. For there is ſcarce any Man ſo void of Humanity, but hath good Nature enough to compaſſionate thoſe that are in miſery, and at the ſame time to ſhew their abhorrence to the Authors of ſuch Cruelties: And therefore, no wonder

that

that Perſecution doth reather encreaſe, than leſſen the number of *Martyrs*; for as it gives moſt Men a prejudice to the *Perſecuting* Party, ſo it enclines them to commiſerate the *Suffering* Party; and this kindneſs to their *Perſons*, does often terminate in the favouring their *Opinions*. How prepoſterous then is it in any State, or Government, to endeavour to force their Subjects to Unity in Religion; when, alas! the experience of all Ages ſhews how impracticable the Thing is. 'Tis true, a State may ſometimes force all its Subjects, to ſubmit to an outward Uniformity in all Things that concern Divine Worſhip; but yet they muſt know, that every publick Diſturbance in the Commonwealth, breaks all thoſe Bonds aſunder of diſſembled Obedience, and that ſuch Compulſions do both beget and ripen all Diſorders. Thus we ſee, that it is Mens being ſo fond of their own Opinions, which gives the greateſt diſturbance to

Mankind

Mankind; and while we are ſo highly conceited of our own Parts and Abilities, it cannot be otherwiſe. Now, the only cure for this ſort of Vanity, is to reflect upon the uncertainty of Humane Knowledge. The reaſon then, why wiſe Men do never appear ſo peremptory, and Dogmatical as others, is, becauſe they very well know, there are but few things ſo certain, as to create much boldneſs, and confidence of Opinion. It was probably upon this Conſideration, that the wiſe *Romans* ſhew'd ſo much Modeſty, when they gave their Sentiments and Opinions, concluding ſtill for the moſt part with theſe two words, *ITA VIDETUR.* 'Tis the Obſervation of the witty *Montaign*, *That as amongſt wiſe Men he is the wiſeſt, that thinks he knows leaſt; So amongſt Fools he is the greateſt, that thinks he knows moſt.* Humane Nature is very fallible, the wiſeſt of Men do ſometimes erre, and therefore at the very inſtant a Man ſeems *moſt poſitive,*

ſitive, how does he know but he may be *moſt Miſtaken*? Do not even our very Senſes ſometimes deceive us? And yet moſt of our Conceptions are taken from the Senſes, and we can ſcarce judge of any thing but by the help of Material Images, that are thence convey'd to us, according to that old Rule, *Nihil eſt in Intellectu, Quod non fuit prius in ſenſu.* Since therefore our Senſes are ſo very fallacious, and from them reſult moſt of Humane Knowledge, how fond and ridiculous is it in any Man to pretend to ſuch an Aſſurance? *Eſt in ipſis rebus Obſcuritas, & in judiciis noſtris Infirmitas*, ſaith *Tully*; ſo ſlight a Thing is Humane Knowledge, That the moſt inconſiderable, and minuteſt works of Nature, ſerve to Puzzle, and Confound it. *Plato* ſays, That in Man there is no ſuch Thing as *Science* or *Knowledge*, 'tis but barely *Opinion*: And in another place he calls *Opinion*, a middle Thing betwixt

Ignorance and *Knowledge*. Indeed, while we are in this World, we do but behold by the favour of a Glimmering-Light, the Phantasms and Shaddows of Things, which Custom makes us take for Bodies and Truths: In a word we may properly be said to see the wrong side of the Hangings; and let us pretend to what we will, the utmost of Humane Knowledge, is but a fair and hopeful Conjecture. Our Demonstrations are rais'd upon Principles of our own, not of Universal Nature; and, as the *Lord Bacon* notes, *We take up Opinions, suitable rather to the Analogy of our selves, than that of the Universe.* How unreasonable then are those Men, who are so positive and Dogmatical in their own Opinions, that rather than admit of the least Contradiction, chuse to make the whole World an *Aceldama* and a *Babel*? And thus, have we not by sad Experience found it most true, That all the Miseries, which have attend-

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ed the variety of Opinions ſince the Reformation, have proceeded from this Grand Miſtake, the making our own private Opinions the Standard of infallible Truth? Whereas all wiſe Men ought to conſider, That truth is a thing not certainly known; Nay poſſibly, the All-Wiſe God thinks it too dazling a Thing for the Eyes of us poor Mortals, and therefore reſerves it for our Glorified Faculties.

FINIS.